PDS PARTNERS

BRIDGING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

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PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice

Themed Issue

For Teachers, By Teachers, About Teachers in PDS Partnerships

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Guest Editor's Corner

Dawn Nowlin, Arethetta Ming

Dawn Nowlin, Prince George's County Schools (MD)
Arethetta Ming, Montgomery County Public Schools (MD)

We hope that everyone is well during this difficult time in our world. We would like to introduce ourselves as your Guest Editors for this Themed Issue. I (Dawn) am a Fifth grade Math and Science teacher at Whitehall Elementary School in Prince George's County, Maryland. I (Arethetta or Art) am a Special Educator with Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, and a Doctoral Student at Bowie State University.

What a memorable end to the 2019-2020 school year we have experienced. As educators, we have had to quickly change our practices in order to continue to educate our scholars across all levels of academia. It seems appropriate that our first themed issue should be published during this time. In the midst of sickness, fear, and uncertainty teachers have continued to be there for students providing continuity of learning, support, and love. "For Teachers, By Teachers, About Teachers in PDS Partnerships" has been an amazing opportunity to talk to teachers from all levels of education and hear their stories about what is happening in their classrooms. It is uplifting to see the partnerships between Teacher Candidates, Mentor Teachers, and the University Liaisons and Professors. As a partnership we are fostering relationships to promote the academic and social success of future generations. These relationships will outreach and outlast our individual classrooms and communities. As a society we are learning a lot about ourselves during this time and re-evaluating what is most important. One thing everyone seems to agree on is the importance of TEACHERS. So, to quote the Kid President, "Teachers Keep Teaching"!

This journey as Guest Editors has been awesome and inspiring. We have had the opportunity to learn and grow as we work with teachers from around the country on this issue. The conversations we have been able to have with partners in person and via email have been enlightening. We hope to continue those conversations in the future. The unique partnerships that developed throughout our network to work towards promoting both teacher candidates and children in excellence is extensive and impressive. It has been a wonderful learning experience that has been a labor of love. We are forever indebted to Eva Garin and Drew Polly for their continued support. We thank the NAPDS Board for supporting this issue and our efforts.

Thank you!

-Dawn and Art

When Teachers Take Charge

Carrie Poulos, Thomas A. Edison School (NY)
Barbara Terracciano, Thomas A. Edison School (NY)
JoAnne Ferrara, Manhattanville College (NY)

What happens when a group of veteran PDS teachers decide to challenge a school of education's edTPA policy and take the learning outcomes for their student teachers into their own hands? This article describes our journey to transform student teaching practices at our PDS. As co-authors of this article we wanted to share our experiences with other PDS colleagues with the hope of inspiring teachers to take the lead for making impactful changes at their own sites. After several years of following the school of education's edTPA mandate, a group of us became frustrated with the ways in which our student teachers were being prepared for the real world of teaching. We wanted to provide them with additional experiences to support their growth.

We looked at teacher capacity research to inform our thinking. Several of us involved in this project consider ourselves teacher researchers and over the years have participated in PDS research with our college partners. In fact, we received the American Educational Research Association's Claudia A. Balach Professional Development Schools Special Interest Group Research Award for our work.

Synthesis of Research

Supporting teacher growth and development is an essential pillar of our PDS work. Over the years PDSs have helped universities and P-12 educators rethink how to prepare new teachers while simultaneously deepening in-service teachers' practice (Catelli, Rutter, Tunks, Neapolitan, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2019). We believe PDSs create the context for rich, powerful, learning opportunities that encourage boundary spanning roles to emerge among all members of the community. Teachers learn best in collaborative, collegial school cultures where their professional growth and well-being are the norm rather than the exception. When educators come together to contribute to the success of all learners (e.g., students, pre-service teachers, in-service teachers and college faculty), collective efficacy emerges (Bandura, 1993). Against this backdrop for teacher growth PDSs create the context for practices that are inquiry based and focused on learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Within this framework, PDSs foster opportunities among field-based practitioners and university faculty to collaborate and impact teacher preparation and professional development (Zeichner, 2007).

Professional Development Schools' capacity to build teacher leadership is well documented (Ferrara, 2014). Regardless of where teachers are positioned on the career continuum, established PDSs often become the vehicle to build teachers' leadership and instructional capacity. Depending upon the type of engagement taking place, PDSs foster teachers' professional satisfaction, discipline specific competence, broaden expertise, create new roles, and sense of purpose (Keller-Mathers, 2018). Many times, the rich interactions that take place in PDSs are intentionally designed to build capacity, but often unintended consequences surface that also serve to build skills. "Engaging teachers in activities that cultivate their capacity to teach with greater consciousness, self-awareness and integrity is a necessary condition for successful professional development" (Intrator & Kunzman 2006, p.39).

Context

At Thomas A. Edison Elementary School, our PDS partnership began almost two decades ago. Since its inception, we have embraced the ethos of "What it Means to Be a PDS" and became a local leader, serving as a demonstration site for local school districts interested in pursuing the PDS model. We gained a reputation for excellence. As might be expected, our college partner established a network of PDSs to replicate our success. It is no surprise that over the years Edison was the site for sharing ideas and expanding PDS knowledge. In fact, our notoriety reached an international audience of school leaders. After visiting our site, at least four schools in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands returned home to embark upon a PDS journey. These successes could not be achieved without a strong commitment to the NAPDS 9 Essentials and a desire among stakeholders to focus on 4 principles of educator preparation, professional development, inquiry, and student achievement to guide this work.

This article focuses on two of the PDSs' guiding principles, educator preparation and professional development that stimulated our leadership capacity and self-efficacy during a year-long student teaching pilot program. A robust culture of PDS participation exists among all teachers at Edison. Several of us have taken on formal and informal leadership roles. We have sought ways to improve our PDS outcomes for the community at large. When the college started implementing edTPA in 2014, we expressed concerns about the preparedness of our student teachers. Furthermore, we felt the new format of the student teaching seminar was missing a practical application to issues facing our new teachers. During PDS leadership meetings and annual retreats, we were quite vocal about finding ways to better support student teachers (NAPDS Essentials 2, 3 ,7). Our advocacy was palpable. Given our desire to make substantive changes and our years of PDS engagement, the time was ripe. A group of us brainstormed and volunteered to pilot a new student teaching model. Coincidently, as we pondered a new model, our liaison planned to return to her campus responsibilities on a full-time basis, no longer splitting her time between the college campus and the PDS.

Institutional Support

This change could not occur without institutional willingness and commitment to the PDS framework. It was vital for the partnering college to support any prospective student teaching design changes. At the college, there was agreement that the onset of edTPA as a requirement of teacher certification created a shift in thinking regarding the preparation of student teachers. This was evidenced during the student teaching semester. To evoke needed changes to the student teaching model in partnership with such a long-standing close collaborator was a natural occurrence.

As a champion of the PDS model and of Edison, the College had long recognized our emergence as teacher-leaders. We had consistently demonstrated our strong commitment to working alongside the College in the practical preparation of student teachers. A high level of mutual respect and trust arose. The College also recognized the value of the opportunity for student teachers to receive a large amount of instruction from experienced educators in actual school settings. This set the stage for agreement on the reimagined student teaching model that ensued.

Building Teacher Capacity

The current model at the College situates all practicum responsibilities for student teaching solely with the liaison, including conducting formal observations, teaching the seminar course, and communicating with the cooperating teachers. The liaison also maintains the required student teaching documents and collects the cooperating teachers' end of semester feedback and assessments. Although the cooperating teachers are fully engaged in the day-to-day mentoring of the student teachers in their classroom, they are not the "teacher on record" for the College's data collection and documentation.

In our re-imagined student teaching model, a group of us volunteered to divide the liaison's responsibilities into two separate roles: field supervisor and seminar instructor (NAPDS Essential 2) with the PDS liaison serving as a "guide on the side." Luckily the school district permitted us to use our lunch and planning times flexibly to conduct observations, meetings, or drop-in visits. Without the willing support of the district and the Principal, this initiative could not occur. The reconfiguration of the student teaching model yielded a total of three field supervisors, six cooperating teachers, and one course instructor for three to four student teachers per semester. The field supervisor, cooperating teacher, and course instructor created a triad of support for each student teacher in our school.

Carrie served as the course instructor and the liaison for all student teaching matters. In her role, she was employed as an adjunct professor with responsibilities for collecting and disseminating all student teaching materials, finding classroom placements, teaching weekly seminars, structuring edTPA tasks, as well as facilitating communication among student teachers, field supervisors and cooperating teachers.

For those of us serving as field supervisors, we took on additional responsibilities that had previously been reserved for our college liaison. We were compensated $300 each per semester. For example, we were responsible for grading student teachers' observations and sharing this data with Carrie-the course instructor, as well as the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. Each semester we observed four lessons in English Language Arts, math, science, and social studies. We also developed a new feedback protocol highlighting both warm and cool advice, which aligns to our philosophy, which recognizes that all teachers are on a continuum of growth and development.

Our cooperating teachers' role has essentially remained the same. However, the level of collaboration among all of us in supporting our student teachers has increased tenfold. In this new model, we've gone back to working with the student teacher for seven weeks, rather than the full 14 weeks of the semester. This provides our student teachers with another opportunity to student teach with another classroom teacher and grade level in our building. We provide daily feedback, monitor lesson plans, provide guidance and foster professionalism. A high level of collegiality is modeled and encouraged as part of the Edison culture and our own professional development is nurtured in our role. We also receive a college course voucher which may be shared with other staff members at our PDS.

Daily access to all members of the triad is integral to student teachers' success. In fact, our student teachers have become advocates for themselves. They reach out to specific members of the team to address their needs and identify which team member will best support them. In the past, student teachers may have only spoken to the cooperating teacher or had to wait until the college liaison was on-site to discuss the issue. Now their concerns are addressed immediately. Our student teachers thrive with this model because they have access to a multitude of resources not limited to their cooperating teachers and supervisors. This model enables our student teachers to check in with the supervisor or the course instructor on a daily basis both formally and informally. They stop in to ask questions and clarify their lesson plans. It is truly a collaborative model because each student teacher works with at least four master teachers. All of us have very diverse teaching styles which encourages the student teachers to establish their own style of teaching. Moreover, candidates begin to develop their critical professional network.

Quotes from student teachers include:

- "The program allowed exposure to a variety of experienced teachers and styles. Each of the teachers shared a different perspective with us."
- "The entire team was committed to developing my interests and supporting opportunities for me to grow to become a more effective teacher. I was able to learn not only about the classroom, but about the community and impact the school has on all of its surroundings."
- "The program provided a diverse learning experience. I loved the support of all the teachers on the triad. I knew they worked together to help all of the student teachers."

An analysis of end of year grades and observation reports revealed that student teachers demonstrate growth most notably in InSTAC Standard Two (Knowledge of Human Development and Learning), Standard Four (Multiple Instructional Strategies), and Standard Nine (Professional Development). Student teachers appeared to understand the developmental needs of students and select appropriate strategies to address the needs. A possible explanation is that the levels of support available during the semester coupled with the inclusive PDS culture facilitated student teachers' growth.

In addition to the growth documented, the school hired one of the student teachers to be hired for the upcoming school year. The team speculated that the support that this candidate received from her field supervisor (one of the Special Education teachers) and her cooperating teachers' guidance facilitated the candidate's rapid growth and made her an appropriate candidate. The seamlessness of the relationships enhanced the student teachers' ability to connect and grow as an educator. There is an underlying sense at Edison that we support and learn from each other regardless of where you are on the career ladder, whether you are a veteran educator or pre-service teacher.

While student teachers indicated feeling supported by the triad approach, we also benefited from the boundary spanning roles and interactions. As we engaged in roles that took us beyond our typical classroom duties, we continually reflected upon the type of high-leverage instructional practices we wanted our student teachers to implement. Moreover, we question our selection of strategies, often asking ourselves why, or how, effective the strategies are for improving student outcomes. These questions led to robust discussions about instruction, assessment, and materials. Guided by the discussions, we learn together to build consensus and share collaborative practices.

The course instructor commented:

> I was able to give the student teachers hands-on knowledge about what it was like to teach now, not five or ten years ago. As a classroom teacher, I can provide insights that many college professors cannot. Some examples are DRA administration, leveling books, testing data, IEPs, how to have a struggling student serviced at a Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Intervention before their referral for Special Education services, in addition to the daily challenges a classroom teacher faces. Teaching the seminar in our building allows me to have providers speak to the student teachers about what their job entails in a very relaxed atmosphere. This opens more doors professionally for the student teachers.

The field supervisor added:

> I have the opportunity to formally and informally observe the student teacher to provide guidance and feedback that is timely and specific to the children and curriculum. These observations make me keenly aware and reflective of my own interactions and professional development while providing insight to the student teacher.

Lastly the cooperating teacher responded:

> My training as an EdTPA scorer provided a backdrop for presenting to our student teachers during seminar. This training enhanced my ability to examine my own professional practice more critically as well as to support my student teacher's ability to reflect on what is going well in any particular lesson and where we can challenge ourselves to better support the children in our class. This intellectual contemplation is nurtured as an integral part of our educational practice at Edison. Had I not been a PDS member serving in various capacities over the years, I would not have the opportunity for this type of professional growth.

Data gathered from teacher interviews, surveys and focus groups indicated the following themes: increased capacity to understand student teachers' needs and design appropriate interventions to address the needs, increased capacity to provide meaningful feedback and follow-up, increased capacity for reflection, and increased opportunities for collaboration. Furthermore, we found that candidates demonstrated positive growth in domains 1 through 4 of Danielson's Framework for Teaching.

Final Thoughts

This article highlights ways in which PDS stakeholders were motivated to take on new boundary spanning roles to develop student teachers' pedagogy and enhance their own practices. Given the positive response from the pilot participants, we believe PDSs can build mentor teachers' capacity to engage in professional learning communities that support student teachers in innovative ways.

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Carrie Poulos (cpoulos@portchesterschools.org) is an elementary school teacher who has worked at Thomas A. Edison School in Port Chester, New York for twenty five years. She helped pioneer the PDS partnership and works as an adjunct professor for Manhattanville College teaching Seminar for student teachers. With over thirty-four years of teaching experience at the elementary, middle and graduate levels.

Barbara Terracciano currently works at Thomas Edison Elementary School in Port Chester, NY as a literacy, math and ENL specialist supporting students in grades 1-5. She is also an adjunct professor at Manhattanville College teaching social studies methods for the past ten years. Barbara has served on the PDS Steering Committee since its inception, is an editor on the NAPDS Newsletter, has co-presented and facilitated workshops both locally and nationally in various settings, including the NAPDS Conferences. She also serves as a mentor and cooperating teacher. Barbara serves on many district and school wide committees and was recognized for Outstanding Service to the College and the School of Education by Adjunct Faculty in August 2019 and received the AERA Claudia A. Balach Teacher Researcher Award in April 2018.

Joanne Ferrara is the associate dean of undergraduate programs and a professor at Manhattanville College. She is the series co-editor for Professional Development School Research Book. She is the author of books, articles, blogs and has contributed chapters to several books on professional development schools, trauma responsive schools, and community school partnerships. She presents nationally and internationally on these topics.

Side by Side: Uncovering and Discovering Voice in the Classroom

Martha Horn, Rhode Island College

I arrive at Lea Riggin's classroom early one Winter morning, as I have, once a week, throughout the previous Fall. Twenty-five third graders chat with each other as they eat breakfast and Lea and I stand, discussing what we will focus on in the lesson that day. That is why I'm there—to teach a writing lesson, but more importantly, to work with Lea on the teaching of writing.

I teach writing and reading methods courses in a teacher education program where my students' practicum is built into coursework. All of my courses take place in an urban, public elementary school. By that, I don't mean we meet in the library or the music room or another space that happens to be free on the day we hold class; we have our own classroom dedicated to university students, a space we build together as we learn about the critical role of environment in learning and teaching. In our classroom, we explore theory, research, and practices about how children learn to write and read. Occasionally groups of children come to work with us there. Most of the time, teacher candidates apply what they are learning upstairs, in classrooms, with children.

Lea and I met only twice before my students began practicum in her classroom and in those meetings she told me, "You and your students are welcome in my room as long as you don't want me to teach; I'm not comfortable being watched." I asked if she would mind if I led the first few lessons with children—before my students took over—and she welcomed the idea. During the weeks we spent in Lea's classroom I saw what she had to offer my students: An organized, safe environment. A belief in learners of all ages. A desire to learn. These were qualities I wanted prospective teachers to recognize and value. They did. One teacher candidate commented, "I just love how Mrs. Riggin interacts with her students—she's calm and she's kind and she's respectful—to her students and to us." Another said, "I wish we could have stayed longer. I know I could learn a lot more from her."

My students taught reading and writing lessons in her classroom during Fall semester and Lea met with them after each lesson. She listened and offered feedback on teaching, in general, but wasn't comfortable offering feedback on teaching writing.

"I don't think I ever learned how to teach writing," she confided to me at the end of the semester. "I'm more comfortable teaching informational writing than personal narrative. I think it's because there is a structure to it; I don't always know what to say to them when they're writing personal narrative." I must have sensed that this moment of vulnerability could lead to something good—for her, for her students, for my teacher candidates, and for me—because I immediately responded, "I'd be happy to keep coming once a week after the semester ends to work on writing with you if you want," and just as quickly she said, "I'd like that." That is how I came to be standing there with her discussing what to address in our lesson on this cold morning in February.

Wanting to Know

I have an idea that I run by her.

"Who is just starting a story?" I ask. "Someone you think will tell it at the start of writing time, and not someone who has already told one." I suggest this because for the past eight weeks I've been puzzled by the quiet of this group when they come together on the rug. During read alouds, I'd leave space for natural talk but there wasn't any. I'd pose a question such as, "What are you thinking…?" and let the silence hang, but they'd look down, avoiding eye contact. It's unusual for a group of eight-, and nine-year-olds not to engage verbally during interactive read aloud, or to say, "No" when asked if they'd like to share at the end of writing time, even when I assure them, "I'll be there next to you." It didn't make sense because the classroom was a respectful place where children seemed comfortable, and I knew they had plenty to say; when they went off to write, they were full of talk. I explain my thinking to Lea: "If we get someone to tell a story at the start of writing—a story they're just beginning and, preferably, someone we haven't heard from yet—it may open up the talk."

Lea scans the room and offers, "Maya started that story about her birthday, the one she told you in the

writing conference last week. She might do it." I take a look at Maya's story. She has drawn a picture of a slide the full length of the first page, a tiny pool at the bottom, and at the top, miniature stick children bunched together waiting their turn to slide down. On the facing page, she has written: *It wu* I believed Lea was thinking what I was: this child who is not a confident reader or writer, who is tentative with English because she speaks her native, Cambodian, at home, might benefit from telling her story. At the same time, I sensed she might feel uncomfortable "reading" her story facing all of her classmates, so I go to her and ask, "Maya, would you like to share your story—the one you told me last week? If you want, you could listen while I tell it back to you and help if I mess up or forget." She says, "Okay."

Maya seemed shy at first but the more I retold and the more details she filled in, the more delighted she became in her position of authority. She ended by explaining what she planned to write on the next pages when she got back to her desk. Her fresh, honest sharing caused me to try another. I looked out to the group and asked: "Who else has a story they'd like to tell?" and Eduardo's hand shot up. Quiet, serious, Eduardo who never raised his hand seemed almost as surprised at being chosen as I was to see him volunteer. He hopped up and sat next to me, facing his peers. Tentatively, his measured, soft voice eked out carefully formed, English words as he told about going on a plane for the first time to his country, Guatemala, to see his mother and his grandmother and his cousins. The room was silent. The children on the rug were still. Then a voice broke through, "Your mother lives in Guatemala?" and Eduardo answered earnestly, his hands fixed on his knees, head facing downward most of the time, occasionally pausing to search for the "right way to say" a word in English, one of the four languages, he told us, he speaks.

It was quieter at the tables that day when they went off to write and I wondered if they had been inspired by Maya and Eduardo, if the idea of telling their own stories felt all of a sudden, possible. Or was the quiet because Lea had followed up on the conversation she and I had the previous week and had set up work spaces for "one" and "two" and "three"—offices of sorts, rather than tables of four and five—to help lower the volume as they worked. Clearly, they had assumed the responsibility she handed them and selected good work spaces. Whatever the reason, Lea and I both noticed the change. We moved together, as usual, me conferring one-to-one with students, and Lea watching, studying. I offered, as I had every now and again: "Why don't you try a conference," but she'd say, "I still need to watch."

Lea was different that day, too. She moved in closer. She ignored potential distractions. Then, after a series of conferences, right there, in the middle of the classroom, she turned to me and almost demanded, "OK, you just did three conferences with three kids, and in each one you did something different—and each was perfect for that child! How do you know the right thing to say?"

I don't remember my exact response. It was probably something like: "There is no *perfect*, and there really is no *right thing to say*… I just used what I know about the student, about writing, and I listened." What I do remember, however, is the feeling of that moment. I was struck by Lea's need to know; by the fact she had never before stopped to say, *Explain this to me—how does this work?* It was as if she had discovered by looking closely, week after week, what she wanted to learn. The room was alive with *wanting to know*—the students, the teacher, and me. At the end of writing time that day, students were asking, "Can I share? Can I share?" Voice was making its way into, and rising up from, the classroom.

I head out that morning deep in thought. It will be a few days before Lea and I meet to talk and I don't want to lose this moment. What made it feel so different? Surely, it was more than changes in the physical space. Was it the power of story, the ordinary and extraordinary, happy and hard, told in English that is evolving, in voices seldom heard? Did it have anything to do with the fact that I keep coming back—that the adults are actually, consistently, making time for this important work? Or was it that Lea had positioned herself as *not knowing,* there among all other learners? Whether or not her students heard her question, they had to have sensed that their teacher was part of something important, with them.

Everything changes in a classroom where everyone is learning. The energy is different and the kids feel it. Being a learner in our teaching opens us up to vulnerability and, with it, the possibility of transformation. Which is, I believe, what was happening.

Giving Language to Learning

Winter turned to Spring and Lea's classroom came alive with writers with intention and a teacher who watched and followed them. Voices and stories filled the room: Damien read from writing that was a millimeter high in a voice almost as tiny. Joshua shared his chapter book about his new baby brother. And Adaku spoke. Adaku, who arrived from Liberia just days before the school year began, who for months smiled up at the pages of the books we read aloud, sometimes whispering out a response, then recoiling when we prodded, 'Say it again?' *That* Adaku faced her peers and read her story of coming to this school on the first day and how "sad" she felt because she "didn't have friends, didn't know the teacher's name or the room number." On the rug, heads nodded in empathy, in awe, in recognition.

We read aloud and studied the writings of Jacqueline Woodson, Eric Velasquez, Patricia MacLachlan, and others, and before each craft lesson I presented, I explained to Lea what I planned to do, and why. She still insisted that I lead the lessons. But on the days I wasn't there, she kept the writing going: conferring with students, organizing folder inserts for record keeping, publishing their work. A teacher in the school translated Eduardo's story into Ki'che'—his mother's native language —so we could print his book in two languages and send a copy to her, in Guatemala. Isabella pressed her published version of *My Trip to Puerto Rico* against her chest, saying, "This is the first book I ever published—in my life!" and it was clear that the work of writing hasn't changed much in the past forty years, since Graves' groundbreaking research (1978, 1983). Children still "want to write" (1983, 3). They still have stories to tell and it is in the telling of their stories that they learn how to use language to discover who they are and what they have to say. They still write with abandon when they have a purpose and an audience; still care to rework their words so their intended meaning will be understood; still, in some cases, write their way into reading (4). Writing hasn't changed much because children haven't changed—but schools have, and because of it, we risk losing what is at the heart of real learning: engagement, choice, discovery; beginning with what children *can* do (Graves, 1983). Which is, I believe, what Lea was discovering.

A new group of teacher candidates begin their Masters program in May and they work with Lea and her students. For most, it is their first attempt at teaching and Lea leads them in reflection after each lesson. I sit among them and listen. One afternoon Lea tells me, "I'm starting to learn that maybe I do have some things to share."

It is powerful to learn in the context of your own classroom, and the learning that all of us—children, teacher, college students, and I—were doing in Lea's room surpassed anything I could have planned. I didn't arrive with outcomes to achieve or objectives to measure but with a desire to know Lea better as a teacher and future mentor. I brought content that has the power to engage and move students (and teachers) forward. I taught responsively. I got beside her in the work, tried to learn how she learns so I could know how to teach her better.

After the school year ended, Lea and I met to reflect on our work together. To that meeting, Lea brought a single sheet of paper with pencilled notes written neatly across the page from which she talked with clarity, confidence, and at times, visibly moved by what she felt she learned about writing, teaching, her students, and herself:

> I remember your conference with Jonah… He was just sitting there staring at you, not writing, and you got him to start talking about something that was important and you kept saying, 'And then what…? Then what happened…? And then…?' You were quick, almost pushing him for more and you jotted stuff down as he spoke and then you said it back to him, 'So this is what I'm hearing…' and you said it kind of like a story and I remember thinking, *like, you can do that for a kid? Like, jot it down?* and I thought to myself, *why have I never done that before, like, this kid is stuck and he needed something*, and then… he was writing!

She told me how the other third grade teachers asked about the college students coming in and she told them, "I'm learning a new way to teaching writing that I didn't know was possible… kids write about what they want to write about, which is why they're so interested, and their writing doesn't all look the same anymore." She explained how, in the past they wrote about the same thing and she'd work with the kids who needed most help and "in the end all the writing looked the same." Now, she says, "They write how they can and I see what they can do on their own and what I need to do to help them."

She talked about oral storytelling saying, "That's not wasted time. That's how you get the whole ball rolling" and "they're so engaged and they listen to each other. Imagine if Eduardo and Adaku hadn't shared their stories—I wouldn't have known them! I know my students better this year than I have ever known my students before." She shared her excitement about starting writing in the Fall as she will be teaching this same group of students in fourth grade, said she planned to "continue practicum" and it seemed that she was developing her own theory as well as her own voice as a teacher. And her learning was spilling over to the teachers down the hall.

Leading in Learning

During the semester I spent working with Lea, the Principal and Assistant Principal were working to support teacher learning. They wrote a grant, built professional development and *cycles of inquiry* into their School Improvement Plan for the Fall, and over the Summer, offered teachers choice in participating, as well as choice in the inquiry topic. I agreed to lead a cycle of inquiry—a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in Writing. Lea and six other teachers signed up: three said they joined because they had seen what Lea was doing and "want[ed] what she had," two were recent graduates of the Master's program—a first-year, and a second-year teacher whom I had as students—and one was a classroom teacher who mentored one of my student teachers. At the completion of the six PLC sessions in September, the teachers decided to continue meeting and so we meet monthly. In her calm, humble, understated way, Lea is leading that PLC. Her colleagues look to her. They ask her questions. In one session, she showed, and reflected on a video of herself conferring with one of her student writers and it was so obvious that she was in a different place from the previous Spring, even from the Summer when she had assured me she "wouldn't be good with a student teacher" because she "[doesn't] have the words to tell them all they need to know." In this moment, words were flowing from her with ease, and they were hers.

Now, a full year after telling me she didn't want to teach in front of my students, she teaches her students as my new group of teacher candidates observe, study, and document what she does and how she does it. By watching her students as they work and responding based on what she knows about them as people, as learners, as writers, Lea is teaching *my* students; they are there, learning beside her. During debriefing, Lea listens thoughtfully and responds to the college students with respect and expertise as they reflect on their teaching. Her words are few, but grounded; they come from a deep place of knowing—about teaching, about her students, and about writing. This, I believe, is the evolution of a mentor; the uncovering of a master teacher who was always there but never had the chance to find that out.

* * * * *

It is the end of August, the first day of classes for college students but not yet the first day of school for children, and my reading and writing practicum students and I walk down the hallway from our college classroom to Emily Gauvin's room. Emily is a recent graduate from our MAT program who was hired months earlier to teach second grade ESL. She has been preparing her classroom for weeks. Over the next half hour these prospective teachers notice, ask questions, consider what is involved in building an environment where children come to learn. In early December, on the last day of class, these same teacher candidates and I return to Emily's classroom where twenty-six, Spanish-speaking seven-year-olds are busy with words and letters and stories and they watch Emily at work with them. During her lunch, Emily joins us to reflect on her first three months of teaching.

At the start of the school year Emily shared with me what she was excited and nervous about, and what she was looking forward to in the year ahead. She joined the PLC in Writing. This Spring I will work alongside her in her classroom, one day a week, during writing time, as the PLC has added a classroom-based, professional development component.

In my mind I look down the road at this evolving, school-based, teacher education program—this "on-going and reciprocal professional development for all participants tailored to each setting and guided by need" (NAPDS 3)—and I see Emily ushering in a group of teacher candidates for practicum, for student teaching, collaborating with Lea and other mentor teachers. This, of course, marks the the beginning of the evolution of another teacher mentor.

But that's another story…

Reflections from the Author

I am an Associate Professor of Elementary Education, yet I responded to the call for manuscripts for this special issue: "For Teachers, By Teachers, About Teachers," because I am, first and foremost, a teacher. A classroom teacher. I teach literacy methods and all of my classes take place in an urban public school. I regularly teach children, grades K-5, as my practicum students watch, because I want them to see that I can do what I am asking them to do, and because I believe it is through my work with children that I can teach more effectively, about things like setting a tone, establishing expectations, pacing, and language. My students see me think on my feet when a child does something I didn't expect. They sometimes see me alter the plan I've laid out beforehand having "read" the group or listened to individuals. They learn that it's not always easy and that I face challenges, too. In the public school, we have our own classroom and sometimes we bring groups of children there to work. Together, we design our space and learn what is involved in creating an environment for learning. I also provide classroom-based professional development for teachers in that school, working in their classrooms and meeting in Professional Learning Communities to address pertinent topics.

Traditionally, in teacher education, we don't consider university folk *classroom teachers* and writing this piece has caused me to ask, *Why*? Does being a classroom teacher mean that our students must be children? Doesn't it make sense to educate prospective teachers in the types of settings in which they will work? (Don't doctors work with interns in hospitals?) How can we teach about teaching children if we're not doing it ourselves?

I appreciate the editors of this issue for their openness and vision.

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Martha Horn (mhorn@ric.edu) teaches education courses on site in an urban public school, co-teaches elementary school students in her partner school, and serves as the coordinator of the Elementary Education Masters of Arts in Teaching program.

The Power of PD in our PDS

Shawn Dzielawa, West Chester Area School District (PA)
Rebecca Eberly, West Chester Area School District (PA)
Karen Johnson, West Chester University (PA)

Where else can student teachers find themselves in a cohort of 22 fellow student teaching interns placed in five different schools, immersed in professional development in technology integration, math workshop, English Learners, co-teaching, and culturally relevant teaching throughout the entire school year? Where can they find these sessions all co-facilitated by school district administrators or teachers, and a university faculty member? Where else, but in our Professional Development School (PDS), in our third year of implementation!

In 2017, a local school district, along with the university within its boundaries, began an ambitious journey to launch a PDS partnership, after two years of planning. Within the first few months, we realized that the Professional Development aspect of the PDS partnership (NAPDS Essential #3) was much more involved than we had planned for our first year of PDS implementation. While trying to establish the PDS partnership, more immediate issues took precedence pushing our grandiose goal of establishing meaningful professional learning experiences to the background.

While other managerial aspects of developing our PDS were our initial focus, we recognized the importance of moving in the direction of realizing all nine essentials, particularly the ongoing and reciprocal professional development (NAPDS Essential 3). Aside from student demographics, we know that the number one indicator of student achievement is teacher quality. It is our obligation to provide meaningful professional learning experiences to grow our student teaching interns, as well as our mentor teachers and to learn alongside the ever-changing educational world. Luckily our professional development part of the PDS program continues to grow over time.

Background of Our PDS

Our journey began in 2015 with an elementary principal, who was a former PDS intern when she was an undergraduate, connecting with a university elementary education faculty member and the university student teaching placement director, to lay the foundation of our first-ever Professional Development School. Very quickly, there were teachers at the principal's building and administrators in the district interested, as well as a small but dedicated cadre of university faculty who had been discussing the possibility of creating a PDS for many years, and were willing to commit to the task of forming a PDS with our school partners. At the university level, we met with our Dean, faculty members in multiple programs (elementary, middle, high school, and special education), Department Chairpersons in charge of course scheduling, as well as the student teaching placement office. At the district level, we collaboratively met with the Superintendent, central office staff, principals and teachers. We established a core leadership team to serve as the shared decision-making body of the program.

As the core team gained input from multiple stakeholders, our plans for implementing our first PDS were underway. Together, we tackled issues such as recruitment of college students, faculty for supervision, interview process for our interns, scheduling of classes for the fall and spring of the interns' senior year, calendar, steering committees in each building, a PDS handbook, mentor selection process, and many others.

The path we chose to take was modeled after Pennsylvania State University's very successful PDS program with their senior undergraduate education majors. With guidance from our colleagues at Penn State, we developed a process for juniors to apply for the PDS in January and an interview process to take place in March or April, in the school district. The interview process was designed to help us make successful matches of our interns with strong, effective mentor teachers. Our PDS requirements for interns begin officially in August of their senior year. They attend the entire week of the school district's in-service meetings, professional learning workshops and assist their mentor teacher with setting up the classroom. They meet the parents and children at their Sneak a Peek event before school begins. Our interns attend the entire first day of school, as well as Back-to-School Night. The interns in our PDS program spend all day Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in their school placement, co-planning and co-teaching throughout the fifteen weeks of the fall semester. They take their remaining courses on Tuesdays and Thursdays, on campus, and some evenings. In mid-December, after final exams end, they begin a five-day requirement in their school placement until mid-June, when the school district year ends. This time-intensive commitment results in our interns spending an additional seventeen weeks of full-time experience in their placements, compared with our traditional student teachers.

Many teachers and university faculty had heard about PDSs from other universities and recent hires, but it was a new concept for our teacher candidates. In our first year, we recruited eight brave interns who agreed to participate in our PDS, despite not knowing what they were about to embark upon! Now, in year three, we have continued to grow with nineteen interns in four elementary buildings and three interns in our middle school building. In three years of implementation, we have learned many valuable lessons, made modifications and adjustments, and grown together. Specifically, as we wrestled with NAPDS Essential 3: Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need, we realized that this was an area that would take much more time and attention.

Journey toward the PD

Establishing the partnership between the school and university was a tremendous undertaking. Our first year of implementation as a Professional Development School quickly brought with it an exhaustive to-do-list along with the necessity for a method of delegating those responsible for those items on the list. As our principal, university faculty, and mentor teachers began to meet in the spring of 2017, there were a plethora of questions to be asked and answered involving logistics, mentor/intern matching, the creation of a PDS handbook, and a host of others that would be yet to come. Almost immediately, it became imperative to create an avenue for communication within the partnership, throughout our groundbreaking first year as a Professional Development School. Gathering feedback while also maintaining open lines of communication would eventually prove critical to the continued growth of the partnership.

To do so, each site developed steering committees that would function on both the university and school sites for the purpose of feedback within each site, the evaluation of the program at regular intervals, and to function as a critical thinking and problem-solving entity. The university's PDS planning committee and the schools' PDS planning committees met monthly throughout the first year with representatives from each committee meeting once during each trimester of our first year. It was throughout that process that the increased need for professional development soared to the top of the to-do-list. With it being the first year, it was indeed a daunting task to attempt to establish the partnership with the professional development in place.

Although the university brought mentors and interns together for the purpose of a co-teaching professional development, it was truly during that first year that the critical need for more professional development organically arose from feedback from all stakeholders in our steering committee meetings and through thoughtful reflection after our first year.

For our student interns, the issue of technology rose to the forefront that year. With feedback from our interns on our steering committees, and from our year-end reflection session with interns, it became evident that it was difficult to begin the year without an understanding of the district's learning management system along with the tools and technology within the district. Teaching in 21st century classrooms required frontloading interns' expertise to enable them to feel as though they were able to start the year on board with the requirements of the district, as opposed to racing to catch up while facing the demands of their internship. True to the wording of Essential 3, a

transformation was imperative to include on-going and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need.

At the conclusion of our first year, a core team gathered to reflect on the newly established PDS. Understanding that continued growth toward the nine essentials of a PDS was critical, our team recognized the need to focus on Essential 3, to develop our ongoing and reciprocal professional development experiences that we offer to both mentors and interns. It quickly became clear that from each lens of the partnership, professional development was needed to continue our growth for the purpose of strengthening the program.

Prior to the PDS partnership, our mentor teachers only had the opportunity to work with student teachers for only fifteen weeks. It was clear that the demands placed on mentor teachers supporting student teachers during the traditional program paled in comparison to the expectations of mentoring in a yearlong student teaching program. The core team sought feedback from the existing mentors in an attempt to understand the celebrations, as well as the growth opportunities. With this information at hand, the core team met over the summer after the first year to prioritize professional development needs for the various constituencies within the program for which it would occur.

As we planned for the second year of implementation, we realized the need to develop a support network to learn more about effective mentoring strategies and analyze and reflect on specific scenarios occurring within our PDS. Mentor teachers engaged in a collaborative book study about mentoring in a Professional Development School.

"Research into the effectiveness of professional learning shows that the status quo needs to be reimagined" (Rodman, 2018, p.13). Supporting teacher growth through quality professional development opportunities is how instructional leaders influence student achievement. As a result of this understanding, then reading, *Students at the Center: Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind* by Kallick and Zmuda (2017), and diving deeper into articles on the importance and effectiveness of personalized learning, our building leadership team felt compelled to 'reimagine' our approach to providing professional learning experiences. While we have always encouraged teachers to promote learning with their students via problem-based learning, passion projects, genius hour, and other engaging, student-driven learning opportunities, we were not yet empowering educators to take charge of their learning.

As the PDS elementary site embarked on personalized professional development, our core team capitalized on the opportunity to include the interns in this self-reflective and innovative process of professional learning. Student interns would learn alongside the partnership's mentor teachers, choosing their own year-long professional learning goal. Together the mentor and intern would engage in an inquiry project focusing on an area of their practice.

While we recognized the importance of encouraging reflective and personalized learning, the interns still desired workshop sessions highlighting the various facets of a teacher's responsibility, specifically infusing technology purposefully through the SAMR framework. The school district's elementary technology coordinator collaborated with university technology gurus to co-plan and co-teach numerous integrative technology sessions. Through these experiences, the interns became well versed in the district's learning management systems.

Engaging our site-based PDS steering committees through an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement guided our work into the third year of the PDS partnership. The interns candidly shared insightful feedback regarding the need for varied professional learning experiences to better prepare them for the complexities of the teaching profession. Additionally, the mentor teachers suggested specific topics to support the development of the student teaching interns throughout the school year.

Throughout the third year of the PDS partnership, we provided at least monthly, and often twice monthly, professional learning experiences covering a wide range of educational topics. Each of the sessions have been co-taught by a school district personnel and a university member. Rather than the limited focus on only co-teaching and technology, like we had in the first two years, the topics for intern PD for year three include varied topics such as math workshop, social-emotional learning, effective communication plans, and behavior specialists. Our recommendation, for PDS partnerships who are struggling to meet NAPDS Essential 3, is to seek input from all stakeholders regarding the need and desire for professional learning topics and frequency. During the first year, we went deeply into two core topics; however, the feedback from the interns particularly led us down a different path the following year. They expressed an interest in covering more topics. Our team decided to provide an initial professional learning experience and then allow the interns the opportunity to implement within their classroom with their mentor alongside them, providing feedback and reflections along the way. As we continue to engage in the reflective process, we look forward to adjusting and strengthening our professional development school partnership in our ongoing efforts to realize all nine essentials, with an emphasis on reciprocal professional development.

Through the course of continued reflection and refinement, our reciprocal professional development student interns, mentor teachers, and university partners reap the benefits of our expanding professional development. As interns search for positions in schools upon the completion of the PDS experience, initial feedback indicates that continued professional development allows interns to be at the forefront of relevant topics, which in turn, prepares them for interviews, as well as a first year teaching position. Making PDS graduates more marketable upon the completion of the program by the facilitation of learning curricular initiatives and technology utilized in schools is another added benefit. As interns, the adaptation to personal and professional learning, occurs naturally in their PDS experience and removes this from an already abundantly full plate as a first year teacher.

Our school and university partnership infinitely strengthens through the continued cycles of reflection and iteration that provides an abundance of benefits to all participants. Prior to the addition of the PDS program, the two functioned more as a house divided with each half of the house working in isolation. The communication between the two entities continues to increase exponentially, with one wholly united partnership. Mentor teachers express that the addition of partnered professional development for interns build the confidence of the interns while it also enables mentors to engage interns more deeply within the internship. Time that once was spent frontloading information for interns by each teacher mentor is now presented to interns prior to and during their PDS experience through professional development. Teacher mentors and interns engage in the creation of a meaningful partnership and co-teaching classroom environment. Interns spend more time engaged in teaching and learning within their classroom experience and come better prepared to begin. Most strikingly apparent is the continued growth collaboration among and between the stakeholders. The cohesion of the teaching and learning cycle threads throughout each lens of the partnership, continuously modeled for all, serving as an impetus for continued reflection and iteration.

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Shawn Dzielawa (sdzielawa@wcasd.k12.pa.us) is a teacher at Fern Hill Elementary in West Chester Area School District.

Rebecca Eberly (reberly@wcasd.k12.pa.us) is the Principal of Fern Hill Elementary in West Chester Area School District.

Karen Johnson (KJohnson@wcupa.edu) is a professor in the Department of Early and Middle Grades Education at West Chester University.

Growing Together: Mentor Teacher Stories from the Field

Dawn Tolentino, Honowai Elementary School (HI)
Roquel Tabet, Honowai Elementary School (HI)
Stacie Nomura, Honowai Elementary School (HI)
Lori Fulton, University of Hawaii at Manoa (HI)
Jon Yoshioka, University of Hawaii at Manoa (HI)

For the last four years, our school has taken an active role in our Professional Development School (PDS) Complex Partnership. The NAPDS Nine Essentials (NAPDS, 2008) guide our partnership and allow for all individuals, including P-12 students, teacher candidates, teachers, administrators, and university faculty, to learn and grow together. As teachers and mentors at one of the complex's elementary schools, we often reflect on our roles, responsibilities, opportunities, and the challenges that come with mentoring teacher candidates (TCs). This reflective practice aligns with NAPDS Essential 4 (NAPDS, 2008): "A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants."

We believe, as mentors, that the role of innovative and reflective practice is key to our ability to work through the challenges and to celebrate our growth opportunities. Equally as important is the fact that this practice aligns with NAPDS Essential 8 (NAPDS, 2007): "Work by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings." We believe, as members of our PDS partnership, that the boundary spanning roles of college/university and school/district personnel are essential in developing the trust and open communication necessary to fulfilling the mission of our PDS. In this paper, we share our stories of practice and working across settings in the hopes that they will resonate with others and provide opportunities for reflection and growth for those who work in PDS Partnerships.

Challenges

Mentoring TCs into the profession comes with many challenges. These challenges may include, but are not limited to, working through issues of professionalism, dealing with personality conflicts, recognizing generational differences, questioning when and what advice to give, and sharing our classroom with another individual. We chose to focus on two of these challenges that we found to be universal for us, and we imagine are challenging for others, along with the strategies we found helpful while navigating these challenges.

Professionalism

Professionalism as a teacher is essential -- dressing appropriately for the classroom, arriving on time, meeting deadlines, using time wisely, fully engaging with students, reflecting routinely, and finding one's voice as a teacher are just a few aspects related to professionalism. Some aspects are easier to discuss than others, such as helping TCs learn to reflect and find their teacher voice, because these are teacher behaviors that are expected to be learned during their time in the field. However, other points are not as easy to approach because we consider them "adult skills" with which TCs should come -- such as dressing appropriately or focusing on the students rather than doing homework during class time. We recognize that many TCs are still young adults and may need help developing their professionalism; however that does not make approaching these more difficult issues any easier. We also understand that these issues must be discussed. The following is an example of a difficult encounter one of us had related to professionalism.

Examples Related to Professionalism

TC1 exhibited a lackluster attitude and seemed self-absorbed. TC1 also showed little professionalism and would only do the minimal amount of work required to pass. This behavior, evidenced by barely acceptable lesson plans, was compounded by the excuses TC1 made when things were turned in late and deadlines were missed. TC1 also spent more time on the phone than observing and interacting with the students, evidenced by the candidate's inability to reflect or comment on the simplest things about the students. Ultimately TC1 recognized that the teaching profession was not a good fit and withdrew from the University program.

TC2 was more enthusiastic but had different struggles with professionalism including not being a naturally reflective person nor being a natural collaborator. TC2 was able to meet deadlines appropriately but needed guidance with planning and teaching. Unfortunately, TC2 would plan lessons during classroom instruction rather than focusing on the students. Several meetings to address this were arranged but TC2 did not incorporate the advice and as a result struggled to implement feedback or show improvement.

Helping TC2 learn how to reflect was also a struggle. Reflection is a huge part of being a teacher and it is a skill that grows with time and experience, but this candidate was only able to focus on the positive aspects of the lessons taught and disregarded any feedback for improvement or suggestions for additional ways to reflect. TC2 also struggled with being an authority in the classroom so I modeled how to deal with classroom management and assisted when necessary. Unfortunately, there seemed to be a disconnect between what each of us thought was important. This became a real problem when TC2 did not follow the management plan already in place and an issue arose where parents contacted me directly.

While the mentor recognized that TC1 did not have the commitment and TC2 lacked the reflective ability needed to be a teacher, she needed to help them recognize this. Being new to mentoring, the mentor struggled with her role and how to help those candidates grow as professionals, causing her to doubt her ability to mentor at times, however, she was able to find support in her colleagues at the school and university. Over time, she has come to see that all candidates are different and that while her first two candidates came with challenging dispositions, that is not always the case. When presented with challenges, mentors grow professionally, recognizing that TCs have various needs and may need nurturing or instruction in certain areas. It becomes the mentor's responsibility to address the TC's needs in the best way possible, even though it might be difficult or not received well. While mentoring has its ups and downs, when the right candidate comes into your classroom, everyone involved benefits. This work, as teacher and mentor teacher along with the collaboration with the University PDS liaison, who also serves as a course instructor, cohort coordinator, and field supervisor, provides direct evidence on how NAPDS Essential 8 (NAPDS, 2007): "Work by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings" can be actualized during the TC's school placements.

Strategies to Support Difficult Discussions

The above story describes two difficult examples of situations we must positively respond to as mentors. To make these difficult conversations easier, we have found it helps to establish a relationship before the TC enters the school. Meeting informally early, whether for coffee or just talking over the phone or online can help establish a relationship, making it easier to discuss those issues that may come up in the future. Connecting with TCs outside of the classroom and getting to know one another personally allows us to understand where each of us are coming from. Understanding TCs on a personal level also helps us offer advice in regards to their future in teaching as a career.

Another strategy we have found helpful is the early establishment of expectations. We start with our personal expectations, but also share the school's expectations. Sharing the school handbook, which includes the student dress code, allows us to emphasize that TCs are role models for the students and as such should dress accordingly. In addition, we emphasize that dressing professionally helps earn the respect of the students, parents, and other professionals. As TCs become more comfortable, we notice that their dress can become more relaxed. If this happens, we refer back to the expectations we set up front. In those instances, we point out the appearance of professionally dressed colleagues to help them see what professional attire looks like.

In addition to the strategies mentioned, we have also found that the language we use can influence the outcome of a conversation. For example, rather than telling TCs what professionalism is and is not, we ask questions that allow them to become more aware of their own professionalism. We also consider the message we are sharing and how it might be received, considering the tone with which we are communicating and the content of the

message. Using "I" statements, such as "I feel," "I think," or "I noticed" makes the message easier for TCs to hear. We have also found that it is important to let TCs know that some messages are hard for us to share as well. This can be demonstrated by starting a conversation with, "This is probably as hard for me to say as it is for you to hear."

Although we try to focus on our language, we also recognize that there are moments when our initial reaction is what comes out. In those instances, we think it is important to demonstrate that we reflect as well and apologize if our language was strong and/or perceived negatively. Still, while we might apologize to the TC for how things were communicated, it is important for the candidate to understand that what they did was unprofessional and how they can correct it. So, even if we apologize for our language we still hold them accountable. This is also another life skill because no one is perfect. In life, we need to practice the skill of acknowledging our mistakes and apologizing for them while maintaining high personal and professional standards.

> "There is a sense of satisfaction that comes from mentoring someone into the teaching profession."

Sharing Our Classrooms

Sharing our classrooms with a TC requires that we let go of control and allow the TC to implement new ideas, knowing that some ideas will work well and some will not. It is recognizing that TCs can grow by learning classroom management through first-hand experience, even if it means that the routines and procedures established in those first essential weeks of school, before the TC joined our classroom, go to the wayside for a brief period of time and have to be re-established later on.

Over time, we have come to recognize that part of the sharing aspect is difficult due to the relationships we establish with our students and the responsibility we feel toward them to ensure they get the best education possible. Inviting someone into your classroom, who may not feel or demonstrate this same level of responsibility toward the students, can be difficult. Furthermore, we have noticed that it is easier for us to give control of the classroom to those TCs whom we feel have a higher level of professionalism, as demonstrated in the following story.

Examples Related to Sharing Classrooms

I have had the opportunity to mentor many TCs in the last 4 years of our PDS partnership. Upon reflection, two stood out to me. Both TCs started out in a similar manner, contacting me before summer break and showing an eagerness and enthusiasm to come into the classroom. However, their differences, especially within their professionalism, soon became apparent. Knowing the mission of our PDS is to ensure that all members (students, TCs, teachers, administrators, and university faculty) grow from the experience, we all worked together to ensure everyone benefited from the TCs time in my classroom.

With these two outstanding TCs, I realized their level of professionalism impacted my willingness to let them fully and independently control the classroom and the students left in my care. For example, TC3 wanted to rearrange furniture and implement different classroom management strategies. My initial reaction was "No you can't rearrange my classroom or change my classroom management strategies," but after reflecting I knew I trusted TC3 and knew that TC3 needed the opportunity to try these things out. Knowing that it would be difficult for me to give over full control during this time, I made arrangements to visit other classrooms during TC3's solo and periodically came back into the classroom. This benefitted us both. I got to learn some new strategies and TC3 got to learn what did and did not work.

Contradictorily, TC4 lacked the same professionalism that I expected of a 3rd semester TC. This led to my struggle to allow TC4 the same control of the classroom. At times I even felt uncomfortable leaving the classroom for extended periods of time, even though it was supposed to be TC4's solo teaching time. This lack of trust developed throughout the semester through many different instances. While we discussed each instance, they were not always easy conversations. I realized that as a mentor, one of my roles is to guide TCs on their professionalism even when I find the topic difficult to take up. I find some concerns related to professionalism easy to discuss and correct (like finding their teacher voice or classroom management) while others are more difficult (like don't do your homework in meetings). To me professionalism means wanting to always be our best and our actions show we are 100% present and giving our best. TC4 didn't completely understand my perspective, but because we had developed a personal rapport that went beyond the daily duties TC4 was receptive to my input.

Both of these TCs learned a lot from their time in the classroom and showed great improvements in different areas. TC4 worked substantially on professionalism and showed growth in planning, but lacked the ability and time to solidify classroom management skills and teaching style. TC3 came with the professionalism established and was therefore able to work mostly on curriculum planning, classroom management and teaching style. This made TC3 much more confident and capable in the end. It also made it much easier to allow TC3 to take control of things that no other TC had previously done.

In working through the issues of sharing our classroom, we have found that we do need to step back sometimes and allow teacher candidates to sometimes struggle or fail, with the caveat that there is no physical harm being done to the students. The TC's lesson that lacked content and became a fun activity can become an important learning moment for the TC, even though it caused stress due to the pressures to keep up with the curriculum pacing guide and ensuring students' abilities to demonstrate understanding on various assessments. Reflecting about that fun experience afterwards with the TC can be more beneficial than stepping in and redirecting the lesson in the moment. Additionally, through these reflective conversations and sharing them with the University Liaison (UL), the university adapts it's curriculum to address the needs pointed out by the mentor and TCs. In this way, the PDS serves as a "learning laboratory" for all involved (NAPDS, Essential 4).

While we find ourselves being challenged and questioning when and what advice to give, we are supported through informal conversations with other mentors as well as our UL. In addition to our informal conversations, we have found it hugely beneficial to meet three times a semester (just the UL and mentors) for more formal conversations. During these formal conversations, organized by our UL, all of the mentor teachers in our school come together to share strategies, advice, and struggles. While these meetings help us reflect on our practice and where to go to best support our teacher candidates, it also provides the TC with short solo sessions in the classroom. The UL also learns additional strategies and gains feedback about current TC assignments in regards to how they are linked to current teaching in the classroom. These solo sessions help the teacher candidates develop their classroom management, develop confidence, and establish them as a teacher in the students' eyes.

Growth Opportunities

Mentoring can be a difficult task, one that requires extra time and energy, for which physical compensation includes a certificate of appreciation and a small stipend. So, based on the challenges mentioned above, some might ask why we continue to mentor TCs. While there are challenges, ultimately the opportunities for growth outweigh those challenges, and, like many, we return semester after semester, welcoming new TCs into our classroom for these growth opportunities.

First, there is a sense of satisfaction that comes from mentoring someone into the teaching profession. We all know teachers are necessary

and being able to help someone else become part of the profession that we love gives us pride, especially when we hear about their successes and excitement as young teachers. There is even a sense of satisfaction when a TC discovers just how difficult teaching is and decides to pursue a career more in line with their own interests. Even though they may not have been the best TC, we have helped them to discover a path that will allow them to be happy and prevent the certification of a lackluster teacher.

Secondly, a teacher needs to have a growth mindset (Dweck, 2015) in order to teach the growth mindset to others. Teacher candidates bring new ideas and perspectives into the classroom. When the mentor has a growth mindset they can learn from the TC. The relationship becomes reciprocal. A classroom can become a very small, closed place; however, with new ideas, lessons, and even refreshing new attitudes, that classroom can be reinvigorated and regenerated.

Furthermore, the partnership between the school and the university serves as a growth opportunity in and of itself. By welcoming TCs into our classrooms, we collaborate with both the school and the university to fill a need of the community and support TCs as they integrate themselves into the school culture and contribute as a part of the school team. Ideally, we are helping to nurture our future colleagues who in turn will partner with the university in future years to help future TCs.

As you can see from the examples, mentoring is not easy. Everyone who has mentored at any time knows this to be true. Then why would we do it? Certainly not for the pay or recognition. We do it because we love helping others to become members of a great profession. Teachers, helping teachers, creating the next generation of educators, is what the profession could and should be all about.

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Dawn Tolentino (dawn.tolentino@k12.hi.us) is a first-grade teacher at Honowai Elementary School. She has served as a mentor to teacher candidates from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa for four years.

Roquel Tabet is a first-grade teacher at Honowai Elementary School. She has served as a mentor to teacher candidates from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa for two years.

Stacie Nomura is a special education teacher at Honowai Elementary School. She has served as a mentor to teacher candidates from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa for two years.

Lori Fulton is an Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. She is a liaison for Honowai Elementary School in the Waipahu Professional Development School Complex Partnership.

Jon Yoshioka is a Professor at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. He is a founding member of the PDS Partnership and a member of the PDS Steering Committee.

From Teacher Resident to Full-Time Teacher: The Experiences of a Hispanic Teacher Candidate in a Paid Internship Program

Angello Villarreal, Monmouth University (NJ)
John Henning, Monmouth University (NJ)

I (Villarreal) was introduced to the Teacher Residency Program on my first day at Monmouth University. What struck me about the program was the amount of teaching experience I would receive. Most importantly, I was going to receive compensation. That was a deciding factor for me as I have a family to support. My goal was always to secure a teaching job, and I never doubted my decision to change careers, but previously I couldn't because I needed some kind of income. I was stepping down from a senior-management position to enter a Master of Arts in Teaching program. Furthermore, I had to complete over 225 hours of unpaid clinical hours prior to a full-time clinical internship. Losing my income would be the most difficult part of my career change.

The Monmouth Teacher Residency Program is a unique opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to receive compensation while pursuing a teaching license. Program participants work in schools as substitute teachers, instructional assistants, and summer program teachers while completing their clinical practice hours. Because teacher candidates fulfill roles that have been traditionally compensated in schools, existing budgets are utilized to compensate teacher candidates. This benefits both school and university partners. For school partners, the teacher residency program addresses a shortage of substitute teachers, and for university partners, it provides invaluable experience for their teacher candidates while they earn an income (NAPDS Essential 1 and 4).

The prospect of more experience, financial support, and exposure to the field of education was attractive to me. I know how much experience matters in any profession because I had worked for over 12 years in Corporate America, including 10 years in senior management. As a future teacher, I knew that my new work was more important than balancing budgets, meeting yearly goals, generating revenue, or training new associates. The opportunity to work with children is a special gift, and I wanted to do my best to make a difference in each student's life.

Another important reason why I decided to be part of the Teacher Residency Program was my lack of experience with American schools. At the age of 19, I immigrated from Peru, unable to speak a word of English. It was quite challenging to overcome the language barrier. In addition, the school structures and traditions are completely different in Peru, especially in the Catholic military school I attended.

But as I learned about the Residency Program, I realized that I could be one of the first program participants. From the time I was a boy, I never wanted to just be average; I wanted to excel. As the oldest among my siblings and cousins, I always heard: "Look at Angello, at what he is doing!" Now, as a father of a wonderful boy, I remembered that others watch and emulate me. I knew I could help open doors for future students. Plus, I believed that it would be a way to distinguish myself.

So I quickly decided to attend the Teacher Residency Academy, which is offered to program participants to prepare them for the various teaching roles they will perform in the program. In the academy, I received guidance on negotiating the school environment including information on how to get a sublicense, how to interact with the staff, and the basic steps needed to navigate substitute teaching at the secondary level. I also received numerous insights into how I could maximize my experiences with the Teacher Residency Program while supporting students.

Substitute Teaching

To begin the Teacher Residency Program, I served as a substitute teacher at Long Branch High School in Long Branch, New Jersey. I substituted between two to three times a week from the middle of May to the end of the school year in late

> “The Teacher Residency program created a better, more prepared, and confident teacher who can serve all students.”

June. Long Branch High School is a Title I school, and the majority of students are Hispanic or black (NAPDS Essential 2). Spanish is usually spoken in the hallways, and many students greeted me with “Hola,” because they knew I spoke their language. The students seemed to enjoy talking with a male, Hispanic teacher. After a few days of interacting with them, I was convinced this was the right profession.

I was called often with opportunities to work as a substitute teacher. The sub coordinator found me reliable and willing to cover as many classes and days as possible. My responsibilities varied as I was covering different classes on different days. Some days were math, others were English or Science; thus, I was able to see different approaches from different teachers, each of whom had their own approach to instruction. Some had their students sitting down in a semi-U shape facing the whiteboard, while others had students in groups of four. Many teachers had all assignments on Google Classroom; in others, I had to go over material worked in a previous class.

I also gained experience learning the differences among students, managing the class, and practicing my delivery of different instructional methods. As I got to know the students better, my confidence grew. I was also able to connect with the staff from the school, including secretaries, custodians, and security officers. They all knew I was new to the school and provided needed support.

Instructional Assistant

A few weeks after the school year was over, I received a phone call inviting me to interview for a position as a Bilingual Instructional Assistant. During my interview, I spoke with four different supervisors from the Special Education Department, ELA, Math, and Bilingual/ESL. Although I was quite intimidated, it was extremely important to me to obtain more experience, and I was comforted by the thought that it was a great learning experience. Thankfully, I got the job and was placed with a self-contained autism class in High School.

In Perú, students with disabilities are placed in separate schools from mainstream students. For many other students, especially from a country that segregates students with disabilities from the mainstream population, it is especially difficult to understand why some people have disabilities. So for me, someone who had never met a student with disabilities, the thought of teaching them had always been intimidating. But once in my position, I quickly fell in love with the students in the autism class. Because students with autism thrive on routines, I learned to organize myself and see my teaching from a different perspective. That experience also taught me how to organize community events, such as the Corner Café. In this project, the students serve breakfast to all staff, thereby gaining work experience while earning money for trips and events.

My experience as an instructional aide had a tremendous impact on me as a future educator, and my former students still visit with me. A few weeks into my full-time job, some students drew me as a cartoon character to decorate my classroom as a way to wish me good luck. Those kinds of experiences are the ones I will never forget.

Long Term Substitute Teacher

As a long term substitute teacher, I had my own classroom. So I was able to decorate my room, develop my own lessons, and interact over time with the same set of students. During that time, I was in charge of two classes of Spanish II, two classes of Spanish III and one class of Spanish IV Honors. I had a total of 110 students in my classes. This was a tremendous opportunity as I was able to do everything that all teachers would do such as reports, lessons, and classroom management (NAPDS Essentials 2). That same semester I was doing my 100-hour experience with my cooperating teacher and 23 students in a class on Spanish Heritage (semester before Clinical Internship).

As a Long Term Substitute Teacher, I had the opportunity to deal directly with IEPs, report progress, observations from my administrators, parent phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, exams, grading, department meetings, and whole staff meetings. In this position, I was able to collaborate with different teachers and administrators across different departments. Many teachers saw me already as a colleague rather than a Long Term Substitute. Also, some teachers even asked me for advice about supporting and interacting with ESL students.

There were two big differences between my experience as an Instructional Assistant and a Long Term Substitute Teacher. First, there were far more students in the classroom, and second, I was in the classroom alone without another co-teacher. That meant I had to learn how to meet the individual needs of students while keeping everyone engaged.

Bilingual Summer Program Teacher

After the school year ended, I became a Bilingual Summer Program teacher. In the summer program, I worked closely with content teachers to support the learning of students in subjects such as Math, English, and Sciences. Co-teaching with a content teacher was helpful to both of us. From my mentors, I learned different classroom management techniques and instructional strategies. In turn, I provided the teachers with Bilingual/ESL support and a stronger connection with students.

My main goal to make sure the students felt welcomed every day and make them believe that it was extremely important for me that they were in the classroom. I had to learn how to better support my students, many of whom had to work one to two jobs to help support their families. Once they saw I was interested in each of them and able to meet their individual needs, the lessons and activities became much easier and smoother. I was able to hold each student accountable while making sure they knew it was imperative for them to be in the classroom.

During this time, I was able to design and send a proposal to my principal called the “Student Ambassador Program.” In this program, English Learners (ELs) work on leadership skills while serving the school community. I am pleased to report the program was approved and will soon be released. The goal of the program is to inspire current ELs and newcomers to become mentors within each other and serve the school community while acquiring leadership skills.

Clinical Intern

The clinical internship was my last step before I could obtain my license and become a full-time teacher. During this phase, I was supported by a three-credit graduate assistantship from Monmouth University. My cooperating teacher was a seasoned 12-year teacher who also happens to be the Head Teacher of the World Language Department and Varsity Soccer Coach.

In this semester, I was able to teach three different classes of Spanish II and one of Spanish AP. My cooperating teacher gave me live feedback during my lessons and provided other support when needed. I also had to work on my edTPA to complete the New Jersey Department of Education licensure requirement.

The clinical internship was a much easier task for me due to my previous experiences. Working with the same team of leaders and administrators from my Teacher Residency experiences was a significant benefit. During my prior experiences, I always supported secretaries, teachers, or administrators in any way possible whenever they needed help. That created a better relationship between us, and as a consequence, everybody in the building knew me. I was present at school meetings, follow-ups with parents and administrators, and included in special events. During this time, I also was able to present in different educational, regional and national, conferences that helped me deepen my knowledge and my critical thinking.

Towards the halfway point of clinical internship. I began to receive job offers based on my work in schools and my presentations at conferences, like the NAPDS conference. Two months before my clinical internship concluded, I accepted a position at Long Branch High School.

Conclusion

The Teacher Residency Program has certainly helped me achieve my goals as a teacher candidate while fulfilling the School of Education's vision for the Teacher Residency program. In my case, it was extremely important to me to earn a salary to help support my family. Although the income I earned through the Teacher Residency program did not compare to my previous employment, it provided enough compensation to make it possible for me to spend so many extra hours in the field. I knew that the time I spent in the field would better qualify me for a teaching position and smooth the transition into my first year of teaching.

Programs like the Monmouth Teacher Residency offer several advantages by making college more affordable, by making it possible to spend sufficient time in classrooms to learn how to teach well, and by enabling me to gain the necessary skills to really make a difference for my students in my first year of teaching. It has also given me a first-hand experience performing multiple educational roles within the school. I believe that will help me better understand how to work with tutors, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers in the future.

The collaboration, communication, and strong partnership between Dean Henning and my superintendent Dr. Salvatore were critical to the transition and success of this experience (NAPDS Essential 1). Their desire for innovation in school partnerships gave me the opportunity I needed to succeed (NAPDS Essentials 2 and 4). Even more importantly, the Teacher Residency program created a better, more prepared, and confident teacher who can serve all students.

Angello Villarreal (s1166299@monmouth.edu) is a recent MAT graduate from Monmouth University licensed in Spanish & ESL. Angello is currently hired as an ESL high school teacher and is currently starting the Doctoral Program in education at Monmouth University.

John E. Henning is a professor and dean at Monmouth University. His research interests include clinically-based teacher education, mentoring, teacher development and innovation in education. His latest book is Building Mentoring Capacity in Teacher Education: A Guide to Clinically-Based Teacher Education.

Co-Teaching in Professional Development Schools: The Gradual Release of Responsibility

Amanda Mann, Wichita Falls ISD (TX)
Emily Kate Reeves, Midwestern State University (TX)
Christina Janise McIntyre, Midwestern State University (TX)
Daphney L. Curry, Midwestern State University (TX)

The co-teaching model is a system that has been designed to incorporate the use of more than one teacher in the classroom (Sachs, Fisher, & Cannon, 2011). Among other things, it facilitates the interaction of students with learning disabilities with students who are working at optimal levels, which can increase their learning capabilities (Brendle, Lock, & Piazza, 2017; Peery, 2017). The teachers in this scheme of classroom orientation are general education teachers, educators who specialize in specific areas, mentors, and even pre-service teachers (PSTs) (Peery, 2017; Gerlach, 2017). The co-teaching model is not an academic arrangement that is without restrictions; however, every teaching pair has their own approach and sometimes a few methods that they have found to be uniquely useful (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010; Walsh, 2012). As the models are more widely incorporated over time, seven models have been identified which evolve constantly to fit the needs of educators and their students (Badiali & Titus, 2010; Gerlach, 2017). The seven models that have been established are one teach-one observe, parallel teaching, one teach-one assist, station teaching, supplemental teaching, alternative or differentiated teaching, and team teaching (Ackerman, 2017; Harter & Jacobi, 2018). Even though each mode of co-teaching is effective, some are more frequently used in comparison to the others (Ackerman, 2017). As the use of co-teaching has become more prevalent in the educational system, it has proven to be beneficial to pre-service teachers (PSTs) and in-service teachers alike (Peery, 2017; Hurd & Weilbacher, 2017; Yopp, Ellis, Bonsangue, Duarte, & Meza, 2014).

Pre-service Teachers

Co- teaching helps create a school–university culture that is committed to the preparation of future educators by increasing active engagement in the school community (NAPDS Essential 2). Providing a framework that focuses each pre-service teacher's (PST's) school clinical observation time on working side by side with experienced educators, increases the effectiveness of PST's time in the field. The co-teaching model elicits active participation and collaboration with the more experienced in-service teacher, resulting in better clinical outcomes. PSTs experience the benefits of co-teaching because they are allowed to gain occupational experience on a practical level (Zartman, 2015). These PSTs are able to apply the information that they have gained in their college careers, allowing them to find their niche in a practical way (Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, & Short, 2011). Co-teaching also allows PSTs to see what the educational system is lacking (Sachs, et al, 2011). Ultimately, this can lead to further education in special areas, leading to the implementation of transformational learning schemes that to shift the "norm" of education (Ross, et al, 2011). In a co-teaching classroom, the PST is not just a student, he or she is the teacher as well (Ackerman, 2017; Zartman, 2015). PSTs experience various perspectives which can be useful in the preparation of creating a classroom that is conducive to a diverse group of learners (Gerlach, 2017; Sachs, et al, 2011; Yopp, et al, 2014). Co-teaching encourages PSTs to prepare themselves for their future work environment through a range of experiences that allows them to mentally assess various possibilities (Ackerman, 2017; Sachs, et al, 2011; Zartman, 2015). Every classroom is different; therefore, by immersing pre-service teachers into a co-teaching environment, the possibility of being unprepared is drastically reduced (Ackerman, 2017; Hurd & Weilbacher, 2017; Ross, et al, 2011).

In-Service Educators and PDS Mentors

Another beneficiary of the positive attributes of the co-teaching models is the in-service teacher. For years the teacher-to-student ratio has been a point of concern in many classrooms due to overcrowding in schools (Peery, 2017). Fortunately, co-teaching reduces the teacher-to-student ratio because of the addition of one to two more teachers in the classroom (Harter & Jacobi, 2018). Reducing the student-to-teacher

ratio helps each teacher have the opportunity to spend time more quality with individual students (Ackerman, 2017; Gerlach, 2017). Mr. L, a PDS mentor stated, "Having my intern allowed me to spend time in small groups and one-on-one with more students. I also utilized her abilities to work individually with students. I loved having my intern, I am sad to see the semester close!" This quote clearly shows how co-teaching allows teachers time to provide students with the attention and individualised instruction and scaffolding that they need in order to move forward in their studies (Rexroat-Frazier, 2017).

By reducing the student-to-teacher ratio, there may also be a reduction in teacher burnout as well (Ackerman, 2017; Rabidoux & Rottmann, 2017). Each year an alarming number of teachers become fatigued, overwhelmed, and even fall ill due to the pressures placed on them from a myriad of outlets, not the least of which is heading a classroom and being responsible for the academic success of countless students (Rabidoux & Rottmann, 2017). Co-teaching allows each teacher to have the opportunity to focus on students while the other can focus on a different aspect of the classroom responsibilities (Rexroat-Frazier, 2017; Stumpf, 2015). With co-teaching, each teacher can uniquely contribute to the learning environment, making it easier to foster the smooth operation of managing the classroom, and more importantly, of providing the most effective instructions for the students (Grubesky, 2014; Harter & Jacobi, 2018). This is illustrated in a quote from mentor- teacher Mrs. B, "Ms. R is a wonderful asset to our classroom. She has taken over my small groups which allows me time to get students tested and work with individual students that need it."

Also, by instituting the co-teaching models, it allows each teacher to learn and even divide the classroom in ways that can target learning issues in a unique manner (Gerlach, 2017; Hurd & Weilbacher, 2017). By using either the station teaching, parallel teaching, or even supplemental teaching, it can encourage students to focus better, thereby igniting their desire to learn more (Badiali & Titus, 2010; Gerlach, 2017; Harter & Jacobi, 2018). For example, a PDS mentor teacher reported, "Ms. N was extremely helpful with directing small reading groups, delivering whole group instruction, grading and filing, answer questions, and general monitoring of students". Increased student engagement can ultimately make the teaching process much easier and more effective (Rexroat-Frazier, 2017). Mentors have seen benefits from the mentor-mentee relationship using the co-teaching models. Mentors gain the ability to develop innovative studies that can contribute to the culture of socially diverse classrooms (Harter & Jacobi, 2018; Ross, et al, 2011; Zartman, 2015). Mentorship is not only a system where the more experienced professional guides, but also a system that provides an opportunity for educators to learn about the individual needs that their students may require to be academically successful (Stumpf, 2015; Zartman, 2015; Walsh, 2012). Mentors are given the ability to observe and accurately assess the needs of their classroom (Sachs, et al, 2011; Grubesky, 2014; Yopp, et al, 2014). This can mean creating an inviting classroom atmosphere by simply adding decorations or by aiding mentees with valuable information to direct the outcome of the class, and so much more (Stumpf, 2015). One PDS Mentor indicated that the co-teaching model supported planning, "Great a co-teaching activities, thinking ahead to what may come next in each subject".

The utilization of the various co-teaching models for the sake of mentors creates an opening for mental breaks and the ability to conduct administrative tasks that are necessary for running an organized classroom (Harter & Jacobi, 2018; Sachs, et al, 2011; Stumpf, 2015). Classroom mentors using the co-teaching models allows them to learn and practice diverse teaching styles and approaches that can be used with their mentees and other future teachers (Hulin, 2018; Sachs, et al, 2011; Yopp, et al, 2014). The experience of working with teaching models outside of their normal routine can benefit their overall teaching practice (Ross, et al, 2011; Zartman, 2015; Yopp, et al, 2014). This give and take learning environment facilitates a needs-focused, ongoing, and reciprocal professional development experience for both the in-service teachers and PSTs (NAPDS Essentials 3).

University Supervisors

Implementing the co-teaching model in the methods courses has been an invaluable strategy in the improvement of the overall field experience for PSTs. University supervisors have noted that the quality of PSTs' lessons and classroom management strategies has been evident during formal teaching observations. Since the implementation, PSTs on the whole are demonstrating better instructional and management skills due to the specific requirements of the co-teaching model. For more reticent PSTs who aren't as willing to jump right in, it takes the guesswork out of what to do in the classroom early in the field placement. There is less wasted time getting acclimated because there are specific requirements to attend to. The co-teaching model increases the interaction and collaboration time between mentors and PSTs, resulting in better lessons and more strategic planning for specific students. The co-teaching model has helped PSTs get involved more quickly and feel more comfortable in the classroom which has resulted in better relationships with the P12 students and more investment in the classroom culture. This is evident during initial formal teaching observations in PSTs meaningful interactions with the P12 students and the range of teaching and management strategies that the PSTs are comfortable utilizing. What would typically be evident in perhaps the second or third formal observation is occurring earlier in the semester allowing for PST lessons to improve on much deeper levels by the end of the placement. PSTs seem more focused on student learning gains and differentiation strategies and less concerned about following a scripted lesson, something that PSTs frequently do in their first formally observed lesson.

Quality reflection is integral to good teaching (van Es & Sherin, 2010), and university supervisors have noted that the caliber of PST's reflections has improved due to the interactions with experienced mentor teachers. Their reflections have been less superficial and more thoughtful, recognizing areas for improvement and connecting planning and decision-making to best practice pedagogy. University supervisors have also noted that mentor teachers have been enthusiastic about the model, which has strengthened the PDS-university relationship.

Co-teaching Benefits

Co-teaching was designed to complement the IDEA act which required inclusion in the classrooms (Peery, 2017). Although this new act was designed to help students with learning disabilities through the use of co-teaching, co-teaching has been found to be just as beneficial for the educators (Badiali & Titus, 2010; Peery, 2017; Rexroat-Frazier, 2017). Teachers, mentors, and pre-service teachers all experience the benefits that are associated with the seven co-teaching models (Peery, 2017). With the use of co-teaching, the education system is aided with professionals that have grasped a full understanding of the use of partnership in the classroom (Friend, et al, 2010; Gerlach, 2017). Educators are also given the tool vital for gaining the attention of students and equipping them with techniques that can be used throughout their educational career (Gerlach, 2017; Hulin, 2018). Future educators are able to experience first-hand what it means to operate in the actual capacity that they have been training for with guidance and constructive criticism (Sachs, et al, 2011).

Also, experienced educators who have felt the wear and tear of teaching are being relieved from burnout, high-stress levels and more information on how to reach children that may not be functioning optimally (Gerlach, 2017; Hurd & Weilbacher, 2017; Rabidoux & Rottmann, 2017). Mentors have been given the opportunity not only to benefit from co-teaching models, but they are also afforded the opportunity to scope future educators in the way forward for a better educational system (Hulin, 2018; Ross, et al, 2011; Yopp, et al, 2014).

Co-teaching in a Professional Development School

Professional development schools (PDS) provide a living teaching and learning laboratory allowing teacher candidates to work with experienced classroom mentors as they practice and refine their pedagogical skills. Through ongoing and reciprocal relationships, experienced mentors work alongside teacher candidates in a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practices (Zenkov, Shiveley, & Clark, 2016). PDS who partner with Midwestern State University actively

Table 1: Co-teaching Models

One Teach, One Observe	One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher. The key to this strategy is to have a focus for the observation.
One Teach, One Assist	One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other teacher assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments.
Station Teaching	The co-teaching pair divide the instructional content into parts and the students into groups. Groups spend a designated amount of time at each station. Often an independent station will be used.
Parallel Teaching	Each teacher instructs half of the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material and present the lesson using the same teaching strategy. The greatest benefit is the reduction of student to teacher ratio.
Supplemental Teaching	This strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level, while the co-teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials extended or remediated.
Alternative/ Differentiated Teaching	Alternative teaching strategies provide two different approaches to teaching the same information. The learning outcome is the same for all students, however the instructional methodology is different.
Team Teaching	Well planned, team taught lessons, exhibit an invisible flow of instruction with no prescribed division of authority. Using a team teaching strategy, both teachers are actively involved in the lesson. From a student's perspective, there is no clearly defined leader, as both teachers share the instruction, are free to interject in-formation, and available to assist students and answer questions. (Adapted from Cook & Friend, 1995)

engage in co-teaching as a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice (NAPDS Essential 4). Mentor teachers and pre-service teachers work using all seven aspects of the co-teaching model to prepare teacher candidates for the classroom. Through co-teaching, teacher candidates and mentor teachers work together to positively impact student learning through a variety of mutually-beneficial activities including small/whole groups, STEM focused learning labs, guided reading/math, informal assessment, just to name a few. Mentor teachers and teacher candidates participate in co-teaching orientation and training prior to each semester to ensure effective implementation. The co-teaching models below are included in the training and used to create a log the teacher candidate use to document participation in the field.

In addition, measures of impact on student learning each semester ensure teacher candidates are proficient in planning, implementing, and assessing student learning. Through mentor teacher collaboration, teacher candidates carefully consider contextual factors that influence instruction and then use those factors to plan, design, and implement a unit of instruction, including an assessment plan to measure their impact on student learning. Alongside their PDS teacher mentor, candidates reflect on their instructional decision making and modify instruction as needed.

Since implementing the co-teaching approach in collaboration with our PDS, there has been a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of both the PDS and the university on the part of the mentors and mentees. The co-teaching model and the required PST documentation has given all parties specific roles and defined tasks to accomplish, ameliorating any possible confusion or miscommunication PSTs and mentor teachers might experience. Having well defined roles and responsibilities outlined for stakeholders from district level PDS-university MOAs all the way to the class mentors and PSTs, creates a more organized and smoother running partnership for everyone. This supports and strengthens the integral component of successful partnerships having an articulation agreement developed by the respective participants that delineates the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties (NAPDS Essential 6). Well defined roles, responsibilities and expectations create a better experience for all involved.

Quality clinical experiences are an essential component of preparing candidates for their future roles as classroom teachers. Using a gradual release of responsibilities model, co-teaching in a PDS relationship allows multiple opportunities for mentor teachers and teacher candidates to plan, implement, and assess instruction in a collaborative, purposeful, and methodical manner. PDS relationships paired with co-teaching allow teacher candidates to gain essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions through a variety of diverse settings and activities. To sum up, Ms. Z states it best when reflecting on the pre-service teacher in her classroom:

She vastly improved from her first lesson to her last one. This is a very tough group of 8th graders and she did very well with them. I could visibly see her confidence grow with each lesson, she did a fantastic job and it was a pleasure to have her in my classroom. She was extremely helpful with directing small reading groups, delivering whole group instruction, grading and filing, answer questions, and general monitoring of students.

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Amanda Mann (451flame@gmail.com) is an Assistant Principal at S.H. Rider High School in Wichita Falls ISD.

Emily Kate Reeves (emily.reeves@msutexas.edu) is an Associate Professor in Curriculum and Learning at Midwestern State University.

Christina Janise McIntyre is an Assistant Professor in Curriculum and Learning at Midwestern State University (TX). Daphney L. Curry is the Chair of Curriculum and Learning at Midwestern State University (TX)

Tips and Tricks to Manage Professional Development School Portfolios For New or Beginning Site Coordinators

Jennifer Gleason, Crofton Meadows Elementary School (MD)

Being a Professional Development School Site Coordinator has many roles and responsibilities. As outlined in the 9 Essentials for Professional Development Schools, a PDS (Professional Development School) site is more than just PDS teachers and teacher candidates, but rather, it is the sum of your entire site working together to build the skills and capabilities of the teacher candidates through active engagement in the school community. As the site coordinator, you serve as the liaison between your university and your site, so it is up to you to coordinate and facilitate meetings between your teacher candidates, PDS teachers, university liaison and your administration. At Crofton Meadows, site-based professional development is offered by our staff for our teacher candidates on instructional technology, e-curriculum, lesson planning, classroom management, resume writing and any other topics the teacher candidates request during their yearlong internships. Our teacher candidates are valued members of our school community and often volunteer at Family Reading Night, STEAM Night and our Operation Read Literacy outreach for our incoming Kindergarten learners.

In addition, I am also an active participant in the site coordinator meetings offered at both my university and throughout Anne Arundel County. At Bowie State University (BSU), the site coordinator meetings focus on the signature aspects of BSU PDS programs including Inquiry Groups, and Action Research to name a few. In the Anne Arundel County site coordinator leadership meetings, I have the unique perspective of working with site coordinators from the 9 other Universities Anne Arundel County partners with for teacher preparation. These learning communities provide ample opportunity for collaboration and accountability. This is all documented and maintained in my site's PDS portfolio. Your PDS portfolio is a collection of artifacts that document the work your PDS site collects to document that all PDS standards have been fulfilled. This can be an overwhelming, daunting task. But, knowing what artifacts to collect and why they are important can make this task more manageable.

As a career educator with a master's degree in Administration and supervision, I accepted my first teacher candidate over 20 years ago. A few years later, the role of site coordinator opened up and I was selected to step into the new position. That first year, I had little to no knowledge of what the role entailed. The second year, I wasn't much better! I attended all of the meetings, took copious notes and thought, when I get back to my site, I'm going to implement all of these amazing ideas. Reality check, once I hit my building, these ideas were all put on the back burner as other tasks required immediate attention. Those Post-its of my meeting notes full of great ideas, stayed in the folder until the next meeting when I would see them again and think, *man those still sound like great ideas.* Truth of the matter, it wasn't that I didn't want to implement these ideas, it was finding the time in our all-too-busy schedules with plates already overflowing of 'Must Do' tasks. I didn't really even understand all of the lingo, or have any idea at all what an artifact was, or that I was even supposed to be collecting them. Fast forward a few years, and I am still site coordinator but have learned a thing or two about how to successfully fulfill the role of site coordinator. Our PDS site has hired over a dozen teacher candidates to begin their careers right out of their internship at our school. In fact, a former teacher candidate who I mentored, is now my current principal. I guess I did ok as his PDS mentor!

Why Is A Maintaining PDS Portfolio Important?

Maintaining a PDS portfolio is important for many reasons. A yearlong internship is a huge time commitment for both the teacher candidate and PDS teacher and should be mutually beneficial – each learning from the other. The work your teacher candidates, PDS teachers and PDS liaisons do together to impact student achievement in your K-12 building needs performance-based evidence as documentation. This documentation is needed for the University to maintain accreditation through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.(CAEP) This is a quality assurance measure for academic peers to review the portfolio. Much of this documentation will fall on the University. However, each PDS site is responsible for maintaining a PDS portfolio of evidence -based artifacts that proves the teacher candidates are gaining the skills necessary to be effective practitioners entering the profession. These documents should reflect the work of your PDS site over the last 3-5 years. This will show a history of your site potentially across new administrators, site coordinators, PDS teachers and different cohorts of teacher candidates.

What Is A PDS Portfolio?

A PDS Portfolio is a collection of artifacts from each PDS site documenting the impact having teacher candidates in your building has on K-12 student achievement. These artifacts need to be high-quality evidence that reflect the 5 Maryland PDS Standards for NCATE. (The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education)Table 1.

Table 1

Standard	Sample Artifacts to Collect
Standard I: Learning Community	• Orientation handouts • Methods course syllabuses • PDS teacher training • Professional development activities • Action research, lesson plans • Feedback surveys from interns, mentors or supervisors • K-12 student assessments
Standard II: Collaboration	• Inquiry group studies with notes • School Improvement team members, • School Improvement Plan, • Professional development workshop • PTO agenda with PDS presentation • Grants received with student impact goals
Standard III Accountability	• Lesson evaluations from mentor or supervisor • Rubrics used to assess teacher candidates lessons, Action Research, e-Portfolio • Professional development minutes • K-12 assessment data, action research, • e-Portfolio • Mentoring course TCR (Teach, Coach, Reflect) participants
Standard IV Roles and Responsibilities	• PDS handbooks from your university or county • Recognition of teacher candidates, staff or university partners • Recruitment strategies • School Improvement Team (SIT) Goals and intern responsibilities • Strategic Plan minutes with review of yearly goals
Standard V Diversity and Equity	• TPIP data • SIT goals to address achievement gaps • Lesson plan accommodations for special populations (special education, advanced learners) • School overview data • Verification of 100 day internship

Within these 5 PDS standards, there are 4 subcategories:

1. Teacher Preparation
2. Continuing Professional Development
3. Research and Inquiry
4. Student Achievement

Each of these subcategories can also be broken down 2 to 4 additional sub categories that all need evidence-based artifacts.

What Is An Artifact?

An artifact is documentation that ensures teacher candidates have the experiences, skills, and professional dispositions to be successful practitioners positively impacting K-12 student achievement within the PDS site. When speaking with new site coordinators, I try to convey that artifacts are most effective when layered together. For example, as the site coordinator, you host an in-house professional development in lesson planning. The agenda, sign-in sheet and any resources handed out show this PD occurred. Next, your teacher candidates write a lesson plan, this demonstrates action based on that PD. The teacher candidate teaching that lesson now has a direct impact on K-12 student achievement. Going one step further, feedback from the PDS teacher or PDS liaison, and/or intern reflection can demonstrate professional growth. The next layer of artifact stemming from the initial PD on lesson planning would be the K-12 student work sample from the lesson. Digging deeper, any error analysis based on the student performance and subsequent reteaching or enrichment completes the Teaching Learning Cycle. Any one of these layers is evidence, putting them together increases the effectiveness of the artifact. Photos of each step is just icing on the proverbial cake.

Tips and Tricks for Maintaining Your PDS Portfolio

Amassing the required amount of documentation for a CAEP review can be time consuming. I don't look at it as 'one more thing to do' but rather just providing evidence of the best practices that are

Teacher Candidate Matthew Sapienza implementing a Guided reading lesson.

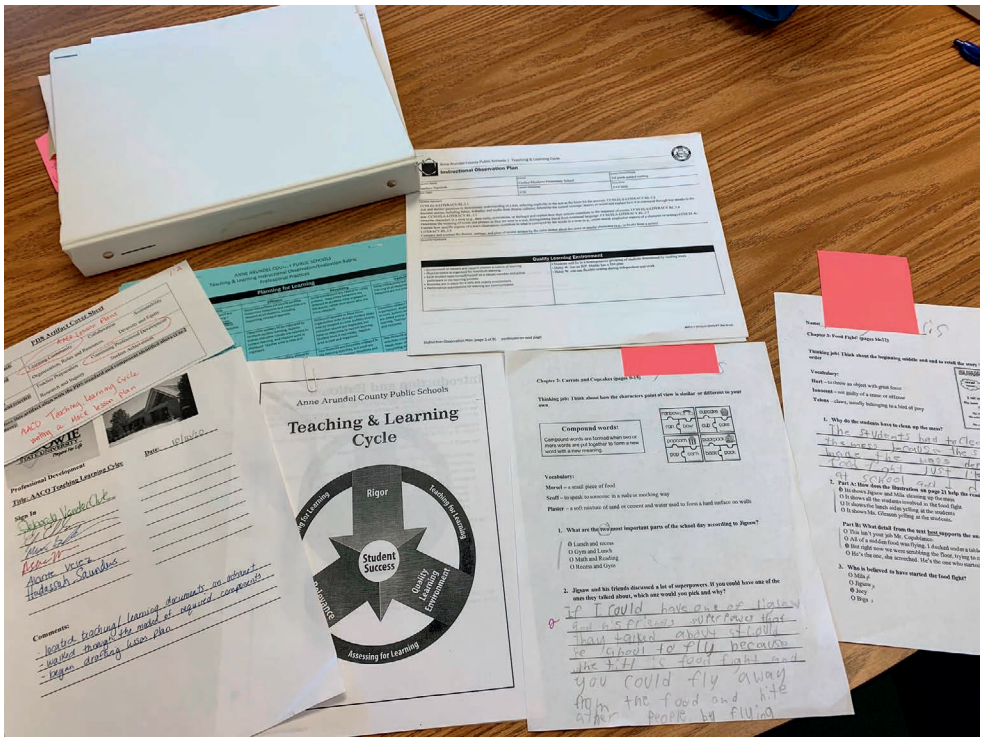

Figure 1: Artifact sheet, sign in, handouts, lesson plan and student work from lesson.

already in place at our PDS site. Seven years ago, when the university I work with was undergoing an NCATE review, the site coordinators were scrambling trying to track down documentation from the past few years that met of each of the 5 PDS standards and their subcategories. Based on that experience, I learned what we were doing well and what could be improved upon. I changed a few of my practices to ensure the next accreditation review, which happens to be this year is more time efficient. This adjustment to my artifact collection will facilitate a much easier and less stressful portfolio preparation process. Here are a few tips and tricks I've learned over the past few years to make compiling our site's PDS portfolio much easier to manage:

1. **Save everything.** You may not need it or use it, but it is better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it. I'd rather have too many choices of artifacts than not enough artifacts. At the end of the year, I can recycle any artifact that I did not end up selecting for the portfolio.
2. **Stay organized.** Until I have time to focus on artifacts, I put all PDS related documents in a pile until I have the time to thoroughly sort through them. I keep all agendas and notes from meetings I attend at the school, county or university level related to PDS. Other documents include PDs that my teacher candidates or PDS teachers attend such as co-teaching, equity and behavior management that are designed to improve student achievement. Lesson plans, evaluations from PDS teachers and liaisons and K-12 student work samples are collected. About once a quarter, I will sit down and sort the documents I have collected into binders. I attach a 1/4 page cover sheet to remind me (or whoever is the next site coordinator) why I saved this artifact and which standard the artifact supports.
3. **Develop your own organization system that works for you**. For me, I organize my PDS site portfolio into 5 binders, one for each Maryland PDS Standard. This was a very helpful system for me because I quickly discovered I had an abundance of artifacts for *Standard 1: Learning Community* and *Standard 2: Collaboration*. I also discovered that I did not have many artifacts at all for *Standard 5: Diversity and Equity.* When I initially had a single binder as my portfolio with a tab for each standard, it wasn't as apparent which standards had sufficient documentation. Based on this discovery, I was able to be more mindful to collect artifacts for *Standard 5.* It wasn't necessarily that I didn't have artifacts to support equitable instruction for diverse populations, but some artifacts can be filed in more than one Standard. For example, *Standard 5.1: Diversity and Equity. Teacher Preparation* can include verification of interns completing 100 days of a year long internship. Previously, I had filed that artifact under *Standard 3: Accountability*. Another example of an artifact that can fulfil multiple standards is teacher candidate notes or reflections from meetings attended with special educators or lesson plans incorporating co-teaching strategies. These had been filed under *Standard 2: Collaboration.* Although these artifacts can fulfil either standard, knowing I was artifact heavy in *Standard 2*, but very light in *Standard 5* guided my decision making process for which standard I filed these types of artifacts. Here is the link to a YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BDYdHFxQLQ
4. **Interns In Action Wall:** Provide a space, a wall or bulletin board, for teacher candidates to share the work they are doing in their K-12 classrooms. The rationale for this showcase is to ensure all PDS stakeholders, students, and the community easily recognize your teacher candidates as valued members of the school community but also see the benefits of being a PDS site. This wall grows as our teacher candidates add new skills and experiences they gain in our PDS site and is in itself an artifact. Photos of our teacher candidates working with students are posted with a short blurb captioning the photo. Additionally, certificates earned during the teacher candidate's year long internship are posted, as well as any special announcements such as job fair, or who was recently hired is posted for all to see and celebrate. K-12 students, fellow teacher candidates, staff, parents and building visits

Site based PDS Coordinator Jen Gleason in front of the Interns in Action Wall

are often seen stopping to look at the new artifacts posted.

Link for a YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkGuT0DAw_M

5. Be Pro-Active: One frustration I have heard expressed from other site coordinators is gathering all of the artifacts from the teacher candidates to include on PDS portfolios is that it is too time-consuming. To prevent a frenzied scrambled at the end of each semester trying to gather documents from soon to be graduates, I give the teacher candidates a list of documents I will need from them at the beginning of the semester and make it the teacher candidate's responsibility to ensure these items are turned in before the end of the semester. This way, I am not chasing down artifacts for the portfolio. The teacher candidates turn their artifacts into me saving valuable time. My responsibility is to file the artifact under the appropriate standard. Documents I expect teacher candidates to submit include lesson plans, PDS teacher and PDS liaison instructional feedback, 3-way conference evaluations, K-12 student work samples, Action Research and final e-portfolios. Photographic evidence is embedded in the final e-portfolio our teacher candidates are required to complete. By printing these e-portfolios out, I have yet 1 more artifact that documents multiple PDS standards.

The work we do in PDS matters. Teacher candidates need to be supported lest they burn out and leave the profession within the first 5 years. We need to be in strong ***learning communities*** that ***collaborate***, are held ***accountable*** for the ***role and responsibility*** of teaching and learning with ***diverse*** populations. Is your PDS portfolio work? A little. Is it worth it? Absolutely!

Jennifer Gleason (jgleason@aacps.org) is a career educator in AACPS. She has served has a mentor teacher for 20+ years and PDS site coordinator for 15+ years in partnership with BSU.

When We Came to a Fork in the Road, We Took It

Linda (Margusity) Giles, MNE State College Area School District (PA)
Nicholas Reitz, PFE State College Area School District (PA)

Imagine the gift of spending time in multiple elementary classrooms over the span of an entire year, observing, guiding and supporting pre-service teachers in all aspects of their learning. Then, returning to the classroom, applying all of the knowledge accumulated during that time to one's own classroom. This is the experience of released classroom teachers in a partnership located in Central Pennsylvania. Within this partnership, classroom teachers are provided the opportunity to be released from their elementary teaching responsibilities to become teacher educators who teach and supervise pre-service teachers in the partnership's professional development school. This exemplifies two of the PDS Nine Essentials, Essential 4: a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants and Essential 8: Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings. This article describes the experiences of two released classroom teachers as they transitioned into and out of their positions in the PDS.

I (Linda) have been teaching in the school district since 1988, with the first 18 years in second grade. During this time our PDS expanded, enabling me to become a mentor with our full-year interns for my last five years in that grade. When I decided to move to third grade, I had five more years working with interns. While mentoring each intern, I also developed relationships with their respective supervisors, or Professional Development Associates (PDA). More than one PDA asked me if the PDA position interested me. I was reluctant at first, but when my response turned from "at some point," to "yes!", I knew it was time to apply. The PDA position intrigued me for many reasons. Our partnership's PDAs who worked with my interns came from a variety of positions: released classroom teachers, university faculty, graduate students, and retired district teachers. Being part of this group would give me access to multiple viewpoints and ideas about teaching, learning, pre-service teachers and elementary students. The idea of working with this group, as well as multiple classroom teachers, motivated my decision to step out of my classroom.

My (Nick) My first eight years of teaching were spent in grades K-2 in and around Atlanta, Georgia. I began teaching in the district in 2008, and first became a mentor to a PDS intern in 2010. Over the course of my career, I've had the chance to teach grades K-5. When I joined the PDS family, it was well established, and I have been a mentor each year that I had been in the classroom. As a mentor, the connection I was able to make with an intern over the course of a school year was a lasting one that has continued to motivate me to want to work with more interns. The role of PDA was initially attractive to me due to the inherent professional development that would come along with spending so much time in other teachers' classrooms. I eventually learned that there was much more to be gained.

Almost two dozen district teachers to date have taken the opportunity to step out of their classrooms and join the partnership in this role. Although we chose to do this work, we didn't anticipate the difficulties in changing roles. What we both came to realize is that experience and competence in a K-5 classroom does not automatically translate to the role of PDA. Many of us who chose to be reassigned had seen the partnership work through the lens of mentoring; however, being a PDA meant a shift in thinking as we learned how to support interns in a different role. Our viewpoint also changed, allowing us to experience some of the more formal roles in our PDS, ones that might be typically held by university faculty. These new roles were now also held by us, K-5 classroom teachers; connecting this way is part of Essential Eight. Our PDA role focused on supporting interns, helping them observe and reflect on practice as they learned the complexities of teaching. The mentors and the PDAs in our PDS work together to determine interns' progress, and ultimately their final grade.

In our partnership, interns work a full year in one classroom and spend part of one day each week in a different grade level. This means they "touch" the lives and learning of many students. A major goal of our PDS partnership is to enhance the educational experience of all elementary students. Both PDAs and mentors support our interns as they develop an understanding of the complexities of teaching while providing the best possible instruction to students. Knowing the interns will eventually go into their own classrooms, teaching multiple years (hopefully), raises the urgency of our work as PDAs to help our interns be the best they can possibly be.

Taking on the PDA role as a released classroom teacher also means having the opportunity to constantly rethink one's own practice, ideas, and beliefs. For example, some of us are placed in grade levels we have not taught, allowing us to experience more fully the developmental growth of students as well as that level's curriculum. As we visit other classrooms, we get to observe our colleagues use teaching strategies that are new to us. We have the opportunity to try those strategies as we help our interns. The PDA role provides the gift of time to debrief with our interns daily after observing them teach. On occasion, we even co-teach alongside them. Reflecting out loud with another person about teaching is hard to achieve while in the role of classroom teacher. The wealth of ideas gathered from observing in other classrooms through a full year is staggering.

Outside of our interns' classrooms, the opportunities for professional development are almost as numerous. Working alongside instructors, tenured professors, and doctoral students presents a layer of professional development that rarely occurs in the traditional role of teacher.

> “Our view of the teaching-learning process has expanded, and none of us are the same teacher we were when we took a risk and stepped out of our classrooms.”

The application of NAPDS Essential Eight is evident as K-5 teachers take on the work that is traditionally done by college and university faculty. Participating in research, reading and writing professional journal articles, attending national and state level conferences, and applying for grants and awards is work that most classroom teachers simply would not have time or opportunity in which to participate. All of these opportunities both inside and outside of elementary classrooms also highlight Essential Four and allow for growth of our PDS and its members.

In our partnership, released classroom teachers also are tasked with teaching methods classes alongside an instructor from the university, which again shows an application of both Essentials Four and Eight. Planning instruction for others is a guaranteed way to further your own understanding. The opportunity to teach our interns during methods classes, and seminars keeps our teaching wheels greased, and introduces us to new practices and research in that area.

A focus of our partnership is helping our interns develop an inquiry stance, which requires building a more reflective practice. Helping multiple interns learn this orientation to teaching gives the PDA opportunities to fine tune our own ideas and practice around reflection and inquiry. Although many released classroom teachers already have an inquiry mindset, being immersed in inquiry for two or three years means that stance is enhanced and strengthened, and at times challenged. Teaching others to be reflective and develop an inquiry stance requires a deeper understanding of these processes. This is another way our partnership addresses Essential Four.

Once a released classroom teacher’s term is over, we return to our school, and often to the same classroom. Again, a shift in thinking happens as we try to fit back into the classroom with our expanded experiences. Many of us express a sense of loss, of missing that supportive PDA group focused on improving educational experiences for all in the partnership. We miss the adult interactions that pushed our thinking, and we miss the relationships we built. And yet, none of us regret taking on the experience.

Our view of the teaching-learning process has expanded, and none of us are the same teacher we were when we took a risk and stepped out of our classrooms. The years we spent out of our rooms allowed us to experience one of the best kinds of professional development, that which is directly connected to practice, and is a prime example of PDS Essential Four. We teach differently, we think differently, we mentor differently, we collaborate differently. The opportunities to spend time in so many classrooms across grade levels and district buildings brings something to each released teacher that is almost indescribable. Most of us have expressed a renewed purpose for being in the classroom and a desire to keep improving our practice as well as a passion to help both our interns and our students be the best they can be.

The work is hard, even exhausting at times, but the benefits far outweigh any struggles. The released classroom teachers who take on this new role are grateful our partnership has created this opportunity. We highly recommend that classroom teachers take a risk and grab any opportunities to step out and then step back in. There are no regrets about taking this fork in the road.

Linda Giles (lxm14@scasd.org) has been teaching since 1988. She mentored numerous PDS interns as both a classroom teacher and a Professional Development Associate. She also served as co-facilitator in the partnership before returning to the classroom.

Nicholas Reitz has been teaching for nineteen years. He has served as a PDS mentor, as well as Professional Development Associate and co-facilitator of the PDS before returning to the classroom.

From Student Intern to Cooperating Teacher: Perspectives on the PDS Model

Paige Partlow, Carroll County Schools (GA)
Jennifer K. Allen, University of West Georgia

I remember staring out of the car window, with welling tears in my eyes. A first-generation college student, I knew that with each full rotation of the tires, I was getting closer and closer to changing the trajectory of my future. I was off to make my lifelong dream of becoming an elementary educator come true. Through my tears, I caught a glimpse of a sign that read, “Exit 24- University of West Georgia,” and my heart dropped in both fear of the unknown, and in excitement of the same. It was 2013, and I was about to undergo my freshman year of college, majoring in Early Childhood Education. Little did I know, the next four years would mold and shape me into the educator I am today, enabling me to build unique, substantial partnerships and relationships with some of the best mentor teachers, supervisors, professors, and elementary school personnel I’ve had the pleasure of knowing. My senior year at the University of West Georgia, I had the opportunity to be part of the Professional Development School (PDS) program, a newly established partnership between the university and the local school system, when I was placed as an intern at Sand Hill Elementary School. This experience opened the gateway for me to be immersed in the highs, lows, successes, challenges, and joys of being a teacher. My direct involvement in the school, coupled with the unique and lasting relationships developed between my cooperating teacher and college professors, gave me an unforgettable and unmatched insight into the world of education.

Benefits of Participating in the PDS Model as a Pre-Service Teacher

I began my senior year and third block of student teaching at Sand Hill Elementary, a PDS school in Carroll County. Upon my start in a fourth-grade classroom, I immediately recognized differences between my field experiences at a PDS school and my field experiences at other non-PDS schools. For starters, being at a PDS school every day of the week versus only three days per week in my previous placements allowed for immediate immersion into the school culture. It was also reassuring to know that my placement at Sand Hill would be a long-term one, filling the duration of a full year and not just a single semester. But it wasn’t just the daily internship and extended time that made a difference for me. I was able to see my professors also deeply involved in the

school culture, which was something I had never witnessed before. It would not be long before I was able to recognize and fully appreciate other important advantages of being placed in a PDS school.

A Carefully Matched Year-long Placement

One definite advantage of the PDS model is the deliberate collaboration between the school administrators and the university liaisons when pairing student interns with cooperating teachers. For my senior year placement, I was very intentionally and carefully matched with a cooperating teacher who would be a good fit for mentoring me through the remainder of my program. I had a full year to learn from an exemplary teacher who was as committed to my learning as she was to the learning of her students. She fully allowed me to be an impactful second teacher in our classroom. From day one, my cooperating teacher invited and encouraged me to become fully involved in all classroom procedures and student learning experiences.

Not only did I have a full year to bond with my cooperating teacher, but I also had time to connect deeply with my students, fellow PDS peers, and professors. This was significant for me, as I realized early on that one of the most important things needed to develop as an exemplary teacher candidate is consistent, committed, and supportive relationships. I was able to collaborate many times over the semester with peers of mine who were interns in the same grade. We worked together on collaborative lessons and small groups. My professors were always one step away, sharing resources, materials, and guidance concerning any and all content learned in class. They helped with adapting strategies to fit the needs of specific students in my classroom and provided me with access to any needed materials to make sure that my lesson was exactly what it needed to be for my students. Thus, the PDS experience offered me a safe place to bloom and blossom and a comfortable space to develop, reflect, and grow as an educator. The PDS model afforded me the opportunity to not only find myself, but create my own identity as a growing educator.

Site-based Coursework

In my duration as a PDS student, I was enrolled in literacy courses that were taught on site at the PDS school. When the idea of being a PDS student was introduced to me, this was one of the reasons I was elated to jump on board. As a college student, it felt nice to have the chance to take classes at the same school where I would spend my hours as an intern. While enrolled in these literacy classes, I was able to learn and practice many of the literacy techniques and strategies that are used in my classroom today. One unique aspect of the PDS model is that you not only get to explore the idea of strategies in class, but you are able to take those same strategies directly to your classroom and put them to use. The best aspect of this practice is that you are not limited to teaching a group of your peers where you reenact a scenario that may possibly occur in a classroom. Similarly, you are not limited to only watching videos of lessons or engaging in discussions about hypothetical student situations and learning moments. The site-based courses offer quite the opposite because you get to go teach in a real classroom, implementing that strategy with actual students.

I am a firm believer that getting to practice teaching strategies with students that you already have a *relationship* with yields a higher return of learning for both you and your students. In my experience, students learn better from adults they feel know and *see* them – adults who are invested in their learning. One of my site-based courses that focused on writing pedagogy provided me with the opportunity to facilitate a series of interactive writing lessons with Kindergarten students, teach a writing workshop style lesson to third grade students, and implement free-writing strategies with students in my placement classroom. All of these experiences teaching writing with students at my PDS school under the watchful eye of my professors and/or mentor teacher helped me put my learning in context and allowed me to perfect my craft as a teacher of writing. Additionally, these experiences introduced the elementary students to innovative writing instruction and allowed them to begin building a connection with another adult – or student intern – in their school building.

Through feedback from my professors, elementary teachers, peers, and students, I was able to recognize my own growth and highlight areas that needed to be developed in myself as an educator. With the PDS model, I was able to cultivate strong relationships with my professors who were able to observe my teaching of specific concepts, strategies, or approaches we had learned in class. The PDS model afforded me something you don't always get to see or experience with professors- consistency. My professors saw my capabilities in the beginning and pruned me to develop into a strong emerging educator in the end. Their instructional practices coupled with the opportunities I was given to practice and develop teaching strategies in real time with real students is an unmatched opportunity provided by the PDS model.

The PDS Community

During my field placement at my PDS school, there was a unique and tangible enthusiasm centered around student teachers. I loved the culture of the school and felt part of it from day one. Because of the investment of the administration and the teachers at my school, I was given more experiences that, in turn, made me feel like an important member of the community and resulted in me having a vast patriotism for my school. The school principal, Carla Meigs, was always sure to include student interns on all school-wide emails, invited us to be part of all morale-building initiatives, and made sure we always had school spirit wear to wear on Spirit Fridays.

Additionally, I got to experience several field trips with my class, was given the opportunity to participate in clubs that my cooperating teacher was helping with, and had frequent opportunities to eat lunch with my class and cooperating teacher. I attended parent-teacher conferences, and was given the chance to be involved in the RTI (now MTSS) process. I saw first-hand the behind-the-scenes mandates of teachers. I also participated in the beginning of school experience, which gave me the opportunity to come to the school during pre-planning. During that time, I was able to see all that goes into preparing for the first day of school and laying the foundation for a successful school year. Any opportunity that was given for me to be involved, I took. I was able to fully experience what it meant to be a Sand Hill Patriot, and I truly felt like part of the school.

> **"The PDS model afforded me opportunities to see myself transform into the educator I always knew I could and would be."**

Benefits of Participating in the PDS Model as an In-Service Teacher

When the opportunity came to apply to teach at the PDS school that had put so much into developing me as an educator, I applied without hesitation. I was thrilled about the thought of having the opportunity to teach where I'd learned. I was hired to teach at Sand Hill in March 2017, and began my teaching career as a fourth-grade teacher in August of the same year.

Early Career Mentor

Diving into my career as a classroom teacher immediately following my immersion in the PDS program at the same school was an unparalleled and electrifying experience. Due to my extensive,

involved time as a student teacher in the PDS Program, I had an extreme upper hand after being hired as a teacher at that same school. My familiarity with the school culture, norms, expectations, and initiatives allowed me to focus more on my students' needs- much more so than a first-year teacher would usually be able to do. Also, I student-taught in fourth grade and was hired as a fourth-grade teacher, so my intimate depth of knowledge of the standards set me apart. In some ways, I had the knowledge and insight of a second-year teacher, as I already knew the ways and customs of my school and grade level.

During my first year of teaching, I was invited to speak with a group of student interns who were interning at my school and taking site-based courses. The students were participating in the same PDS model in the same school, and were taught by the same professors I had. My professor, Dr. Jennifer Allen, offered me a unique experience that speaks volumes about the value of the PDS model and the relationships that are built and sustained through it. I was able to speak with the teacher candidates about effective instructional practices in literacy, most of which I had been implementing since I learned them in my PDS site-based courses. I was also able to relate to them, and inform them that their first year as teachers would be what they made it. I felt honored and validated to be able to speak with teacher candidates who were in the same place I had been sitting just one year before. I constantly operated from a sense of understanding and compassion for student interns that went through the program after me. I was able to relate to the desire to want the most out of the program, and the desire to want to connect to the school that would, essentially, become your "home away from home" for the last two blocks of your undergraduate career. This is yet another beautiful aspect of the PDS model – it can be used to mold beginning teachers into great role models and mentors who can continue to build the teaching profession by mentoring educators who are following in their footsteps.

Post-Intern PDS Opportunities

One of the greatest post-intern experiences of the PDS model for me is FitLit. FitLit is an after-school literacy program for fifth graders where the importance of fitness and literature are emphasized and practiced. The students meet one afternoon a week and use a fraction of the time to "get fit" by exercising with our school's PE Teacher and usually experiencing some type of fun sport or team-building activity. Following that, they come in and we all "get lit" by reading our novel aloud with each other and discussing and reflecting on what we have read. My university PDS professors, Dr. Jennifer Allen and Dr. Beth Scullin, are the creators of FitLit. Together, they choose a novel for the FitLit group to read that focuses on a social issue and a powerful theme. The students get to keep their very own copy of whichever novel is chosen, which is an amazing practice since many of my students do not have the thrill of being book owners. This even further connects our PDS school with our university, as our students forge and build relationships with pre-service teachers and professors from our partner university through the intimate discussions that emerge from our after-school FitLit meetings.

Cooperating Teacher

This year, with three years of teaching under my belt, I am flourishing in my role as a first-time Cooperating Teacher for a student intern who is part of my school's PDS program. It is important to me to continually work to bridge the gap that sometimes occurs between universities and the schools in which student interns are placed as part of their degree program. I strive to maintain healthy and supportive relationships with student interns as well as university supervisors. I encourage student interns as they grow and develop, help them think through their lesson plans, and give them genuine and honest feedback on their teaching and classroom management techniques. I also participate in mock interviews where I give feedback to teacher candidates to set them up for success for future job opportunities. I have also had the honor of speaking with different groups of graduating teacher candidates at The University of West Georgia, offering them advice, perspective, resources, and mentorship as they prepare to delve into their first year of teaching.

Continuing to Nurture the Partnership

I often think back to that first-generation college student who very anxiously awaited all that was in store for her. Now, when I look in the mirror, I am always grateful for the opportunities I was given to get a head start into my career before I was even a graduate. One of the National Association for Professional Development Schools nine essentials requires that the school have a "structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration." The PDS model afforded me opportunities to see myself transform into the educator I always knew I could and would be through the shared collaboration and mutual investment in learning from all stakeholders involved. I plan to continue to support the PDS model by being a cooperating teacher who involves her student intern in the inner workings of not only the classroom but the school as well. I also plan to continue to nurture and maintain the healthy and strong relationships I have cultivated with my professors as I know that my students benefit from the opportunities they have to work with college professors and their current students in small groups, one-on-one, and after-school settings. Additionally, I continue to benefit by growing as a scholar and educator. Writing this article is one example of that. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of Dr. Allen, who coached and mentored me along the way. I know that my students and I will continue to grow exponentially as a result of the committed stakeholders who are invested in the PDS partnership between The University of West Georgia and Sand Hill Elementary.

Paige Partlow (paige.partlow@carrollcountyschools.com) is in her third year as a fifth-grade teacher at Sand Hill Elementary School, a PDS school that partners with the University of West Georgia.

Jennifer K. Allen is in her fourth year as an Assistant Professor of Literacy at the University of West Georgia.

The Importance of Research Practice Partnerships for Professional Development

Jennifer Pietros, Alan Shawn Feinstein School of Coventry (RI)
Sara Sweetman, University of Rhode Island

Research practice partnerships (RPP) intend to blur the lines of traditional teacher and researcher roles (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). Teachers who participate in RPPs gain experiences in research activities such as identifying problems of practice, designing research methods and data collection tools, collecting and analyzing data. They learn to be critical consumers of research and gain new perspectives for interpreting research into practice. Being part of an RPP can also inspire teachers toward more inquiry into their own practices and can support them to be leaders in their local community. An RPP is devoted to the ongoing advancement and improvement of teaching and learning which is an essential goal shared by Professional Development Schools (PDS). This paper shares one teacher's journey through the first year as part of an RPP team that was engaging in design-based Implementation research (DBIR). Her intellectual growth and motivation for engaging in the inquiry has been inspired by the opportunities that a research project has provided. In return the teacher has provided valuable insight to engaging in research and developing and disseminating knowledge.

Teacher Reflection

After reflecting on this past year of my teaching career, I am truly amazed by the number of opportunities and doors that have opened by being a teacher working with an RPP team. I am a sixth-grade science teacher who became a member of a design-based implementation research (DBIR) group. This group consists of 20 participants including elementary math and science coaches,

classroom teachers (covering all grade levels K-5), district curriculum coordinators, and university educators across science, technology, engineering, mathematics and computing (STEM+C) content. We have all met to collaborate in monthly face-to-face research meetings for the past year to help understand the current landscape of computational thinking (CT) in elementary schools throughout the state of Rhode Island and improve STEM+C in elementary classrooms by integrating best practices. This work is part of an NSF STEM+C research grant entitled Computing in Elementary School: An Exploration of Computational Thinking Approaches and Concepts Across Disciplines (Sweetman, 2018-2020) (1813224).

When asked to join the research group I knew very little about computational thinking but thought it would be a wonderful experience to learn something new. I think becoming part of the DBIR group is one of the best decisions I have made in my teaching career. I have had an amazing experience that has led to an immense growth in my own learning along with my students. When I reflect back to a year ago in the knowledge I had concerning computing in the classroom, I am astounded by how much more I know in only a years' time. By being part of this collaborative group, I became inspired and motivated to attend numerous professional development opportunities in addition to our monthly meetings in order to contribute new knowledge and innovations about computational thinking to the DBIR group. The new knowledge I have obtained by being a member of this group is remarkable and has led me to the realization of just how important partnerships are for advancing learning. All members of this group have a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practices which is one of the PDS Nine Essentials created by members of the National Association for Professional Development Schools and effectively keeps pushing our thinking to become better educators and researchers (NAPDS, 2008)

The DBIR group has had numerous meetings throughout this past year and new levels of awareness are gained at each meeting. During our first research meeting the group investigated what computational thinking is and how important it is for students to learn how to solve problems. At this meeting, we compared different standards to look for similarities and differences. We looked at the *Computer Science for Rhode Island* (CS4RI) standards, *Computer Science Teacher Association* (CSTA) standards, *International Society for Technology in Education* (ISTE) standards, and *Barefoot Computing at School* (CAS) standards. We performed a crosswalk of the standards and discovered that there was not a shared language for computational thinking. While there was some shared terminology, there were also many differences. We found there was a frequent use of concepts such as: *abstraction, algorithm, patterns, and decomposition*. The research group decided it would be helpful if the concepts and language were more universal in order to clarify and support effective implementation. These findings revealed that in order to successfully spread awareness, it is very important to have a mutually understood shared language between the computer science community and educators. Bocconi et al. (2016) found similar conclusions and posits that clear definitions and conceptualizations lead to effective learning objectives and curricula.

Just by having that first meeting I had a better understanding of what computational thinking was by collaborating with different people and sharing our ideas as a whole group. I soon learned computational thinking was a problem-solving process that is broken down into different concepts and approaches. The main concepts are breaking a problem down into its component parts, known as *decomposition*. It involves looking for similarities or recognizing *patterns*. It includes learning how to pull out the important parts in solving a problem and removing the unnecessary details known as *abstraction*. It also entails creating a step by step procedure for solving a problem also known as creating an *algorithm*. I learned about some of the approaches to learning students have while solving a problem consisting of being creative, having perseverance, collaborating, being able to debug, and being able to tinker. By working with this group, I was able to understand examples of these different concepts and approaches and how they happen in the classroom. For example, when students create a procedure for planting a seed, they are using algorithms. When students create life cycles, they are practicing their decomposition skills. Finding similarities and differences in data collected in science represents identifying patterns. They are practicing abstraction when they make notes and charts of the most important properties in science or when they create models (Barefoot Computing, n.d.). I realized many of these concepts were already happening in the classroom, but they just were not explicitly taught using the computational thinking terminology.

I also began to have an appreciation for the importance of teaching computational thinking at the elementary level. I learned how important it is to increase access to computer science subject matter for every child because not only does it address the needs of the workforce and skills needed in the digital age, but more importantly it addresses foundational educational needs such as being able to think critically to solve problems, data analysis, and modelling skills (Papert, 1980, Khine, 2018). I learned one of the biggest challenges to integrating computational thinking into the elementary classroom will be having teachers buy-in to the changes that will need to be made in their practice. Teachers often feel uncomfortable when they are directed to implement something new which sometimes results in stress, anxiety, or even cynicism, especially if it involves teaching something, they know little about. By teachers having a voice at these meetings, researchers were able to hear some of their concerns about implementation and were insightful in coming up with strategies to meet these needs.

As a group we also reviewed and helped create a survey that would be sent out to over 40 elementary schools in Rhode Island to obtain information about their current practices with CT. We all worked together to improve the content and face validity of the computational thinking survey for elementary school teachers by providing feedback on the clarity of wording, layout and style, and likelihood elementary teachers would be able to answer the questions on the survey. We also have made suggestions for adding and deleting questions to help improve the survey. This survey will be helpful in influencing policy makers on the best practices for integrating computational thinking in elementary school curriculum in the future. Being part of the research design process has helped me, as a teacher, to more effectively sort through "research-based" strategies and curriculum and translate research into practice.

We also participated in value-mapping and crosswalk research using the concepts and approaches of computational thinking. Ryoo and Shea (2015) believe that educators and researchers bring different values, experiences, and languages to the table. However, through collaboration in value mapping, a shared investment in research questions and strategies are developed. Throughout the value mapping process several products were produced which included a Padlet, various multimedia reports, and posters. The padlet serves as a research hub that highlights different lessons found throughout K-5 curricula in different subject areas and grade levels, research articles, standards, and definitions created by the group. The multimedia reports were created for ELA, math, science, technology, arts, and social emotional learning and demonstrate computational thinking integration throughout the different subject areas and grade levels. Also, posters were created to hang in classrooms to spread awareness all designed and made by members of the group. Through this whole process our group has gained a better understanding of the CT concepts and approaches used across the curriculum. We recognize how CT is already occurring in existing curriculum while also finding areas where it can be easily integrated. The

"This new knowledge and experience I gained has been put to the test while delivering digital instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic."

beginning survey data is starting to reveal that the survey itself increases elementary teachers' awareness of computational thinking which will help with implementation efforts in the future.

This project has allowed for a great deal of training and professional development opportunities. This project has inspired me and a few of the other teachers in the group to take the ISTE Introduction to Computational Thinking for Every Educator Course, which is a 15-hour course that teaches educators how to integrate CT across different subject areas and grade levels. This course helps to increase awareness of CT and uses different examples of activities that integrate computational thinking in the different subject areas. The course also has participants create a plan or a lesson to incorporate CT into the curricula. The course has opportunities for discussions about CT and provides a platform for educators to share lessons they create with people all over the United States and other countries that have integrated the four components of computational thinking which include decomposition, abstraction, recognizing patterns, and creating algorithms. I created a lesson for this course on a cell model project I do in my classroom where I explicitly added computational thinking terminology into the project and ended up using this lesson for my evaluation this year.

I had a wonderful opportunity this past summer when I attended the ISTE national conference in Philadelphia and learned more about computational thinking from experts in the field and research being conducted in other states. At this conference, I was able to see our research groups' work presented by Sara Sweetman in a talk entitled: No Time No Problem Integrating Computational Thinking Across the K-5 Curriculum. In addition to this professional development, I participated in a weeklong Digital Literacy Institute where I worked with a media specialist teacher from Barrington, RI to design a digital site for educating others about computational thinking and how it can be integrated into lessons. Participants who attended the institute came from 17 different states and 5 different countries and were able to view the product created which helped spread more awareness about computational thinking. I also attended a week-long code.org training for CS Discoveries which has computational thinking embedded throughout all the lessons to get a better handle on how coding is involved in computational thinking. Through this experience, I met a network of 30 other educators who are implementing a curriculum that uses CT. I also became a member of the Computer Science Teacher Association (CSTA) where I attend monthly meetings to stay informed of the Computer Science for all of Rhode Island (CS4RI) Initiative. At one of the local meetings someone from the National Integrated Cyber Education Research Center (NICERC) presented a pilot curriculum for integrating CT into third to fifth grade science, English, and math lessons.

Another opportunity I had with the DBIR group is a small group of us teacher leaders presented at the Rhode Island Science Teacher Association conference. At the conference we introduced teachers to the ideas of computational thinking and asked them to participate in different activities and think about where CT concepts and approaches were evident throughout the activities. In addition, I participated in a course entitled Inclusive Teaching in Computer Science: Be an Agent of Change. In this course I learned how to tackle some of the biggest challenges facing computer science education such as implicit bias, racism, sexism, and ableism to expand my teaching practices to be more inclusive to students who are historically underrepresented in computer science.

When reflecting on this past year I realize my thinking has changed a great deal. I originally started out as a teacher who knew little about computational thinking and thought it was about teaching math in the classroom. I now have a solid understanding of what CT entails and consciously add it to my lessons and see many opportunities in different subject areas. I also make sure I explicitly state the different terms such as decomposition, abstraction, finding patterns, and creating algorithms when my students are demonstrating these concepts in the classroom. I have learned about the value of CT being integrated into curriculum and have shared my knowledge with colleagues in my building and others in the state. In addition, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse team of people who have different perspectives and ideas about CT. This has allowed me to think about CT in ways that are different from my original thinking which has motivated me to learn more about this topic. I have used many of the resources from our meetings in my lessons and the poster created by the group about CT hangs in my classroom along with many other classrooms for students throughout Rhode Island to see. By working with this DBIR group, I truly feel I have a network of support and have not been afraid to take risks in the classroom when trying new lessons. This new knowledge and experience I gained has been put to the test while delivering digital instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has allowed for an easier transition when taking risks in this new way of teaching and has helped with effective collaboration among colleagues, the sharing of resources, and communication within my community to meet the needs of our students. It has been an honor working with such a diverse group of educators and researchers and I hope every teacher can experience this type of partnership in their career.

Implications

The implementation of integrated computational thinking in elementary school throughout the state will be more viable because practicing teachers participated in the research. In addition, the work ahead which includes the translation of research to practice will be well guided by the teachers who participated in the research project. The relationships and trust that was built between the researchers and the practitioners will continue to benefit both communities. Researchers will have access to authentic problems of practice and real-world lab classrooms to test instructional activities and effective teaching practices; while teachers will be able to co-engage in the inquiry process, gain professional learning experiences and resources to continually improve student learning. Recent experiences with distance teaching have shown the need for teachers to have confidence and be able to take risks to cope with future educational challenges. Partnerships between K-12 and university educators will allow for the support essential in creating and delivering reflective and innovative instruction using best practices for computational thinking.

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Jennifer Pietros (pietrosjennifer@coventryschools.net) is a sixth-grade science teacher who has been teaching in Rhode Island for over 17 years. She is part of a research team exploring computational thinking.

Sara Sweetman is an assistant professor of education at the University of Rhode Island (URI) and directs URI's School of Education's Guiding Education in Math and Science Network (GEMS-Net).

Partners at Work

Deana Washell, State College Area School District (PA)
Colleen McCracken, State College Area School District (PA)
Anne Elrod Whitney, Pennsylvania State University (PA)

The photos below depict writing partners at work. These are second and third graders in our shared writing workshop that we have been co-teaching for the last 6 years. In these photos, we see not only individual writers we have taught working together, but also themes that articulate much of what we care about when we work with these writers.

First, we see *energy.* You don't see writers with their heads down, disengaged from one another or from our work. They are actively pursuing something that they care about. Second, we see *listening.* When one writer is talking, the other makes eye contact or looks at the writing they're discussing. Their attention is focused on the opportunity to learn from each other. Third, we see *vulnerability.* These writers are sharing work in progress, work they know is messy and unfinished. They are taking the risk of showing something rough, for the reward of making their writing better. Finally, we see *accountability*. These partners are holding each other to their commitments as writers. They are checking in on progress made from past conversations, and they are following up on questions raised the last time they met.

When these partners work together, more than one partner benefits. Instead, *all* partners move forward and are stronger from the experience. They get better at writing *and* at learning to write. These photos of partners at work show us things we also think are important for understanding teachers as "partners at work." We (Deana, Anne, and Colleen) function as a partnership, and our collaboration pushes us forward.

Teacher Partners

Deana and Colleen have been working as partners for many years. They were partners initially when Deana was a mentor teacher and methods instructor and Colleen was a PDS intern in her senior year of college, and they were partners later when they taught second and third grade at the same school. They worked as partners when both serving as mentor teachers to later interns, and they worked as partners later when they teamed up to co-teach science education methods with university faculty. They partnered as peer coaches when their school district introduced that model, and they partnered to explore a new writing curriculum when their school district adopted a new curriculum resource. Eventually, they partnered to co-teach writing on a daily basis, bringing their classes together for that part of the day and experimenting together and taking shared responsibility for each writer regardless of whose class list was whose. They invited Anne in as a thinking partner when they learned she was interested in writing teachers, and as a teaching partner when she started to jump in with the kids too. Eventually, we three partnered to co-write a book on one aspect of our practice as writing teachers, called *Teaching Writers to Reflect: Strategies for a More Thoughtful Writing Workshop* (Whitney et al., 2019).

PDS Partners

Our Professional Development School partnership, now more than 20 years old, is also about collaboration in a way that pushes all partners forward, including mentors, interns, Professional Development Associates, university graduate students and university faculty members. All of these partners work and learn together in ways that mirror what we noticed in the photographs of our young writers.

Again, we see *energy.* Mentor teachers and other "long-timers" like Deana find themselves energized by a new voice in the room; university faculty like Anne gain energy from being back in the classroom with kids on a regular basis, and interns in Colleen's and Deana's classrooms share energy by encouraging and supporting one another. PDS partners energize one another as they work together.

Again, we also see *listening*. Interns share and listen to each other's plans and progress, and PDAs or supervisors and mentors share and listen to their ideas for support or next steps. University professors and classroom teachers co-teaching methods courses listen to each other as they navigate decisions about what interns most need to know. We come together for hard conversations around problems when they happen, such as when a student just isn't writing, or an intern is struggling, or when a lesson bombs or an interaction is tense. We have different ideas about what's right for a child, different ways we are used to doing things, and different kinds of expertise and experience that brought us into these rooms together. All of these interactions are predicated on careful listening.

Again, we also see *vulnerability*. Problems are shared and transformed into questions. Reflection opens up concerns both in the classroom and in the heart. Leaders from all sides of the partnership have sometimes struggled to let go of how they've always done things in order to build something new together, without knowing how well it will work. Interns, in most ways the least experienced among us, model for more experienced teachers how to embrace problems as learning opportunities, and then share that publicly with the larger PDS community. This in turn impacts the learning of others, but not without a lot of trust that their learning will be taken as legitimate rather than dismissed as "just beginners."

Finally, we see *accountability*. We know and remind each other that all parties are involved for the benefit of students, and that means being prepared and ready. Interns are not "just practicing." These are real children, and this year is their only year in a second or third grade classroom. At the same time, interns can't learn without chances to step up and even to struggle, and we keep each other accountable to that goal too.

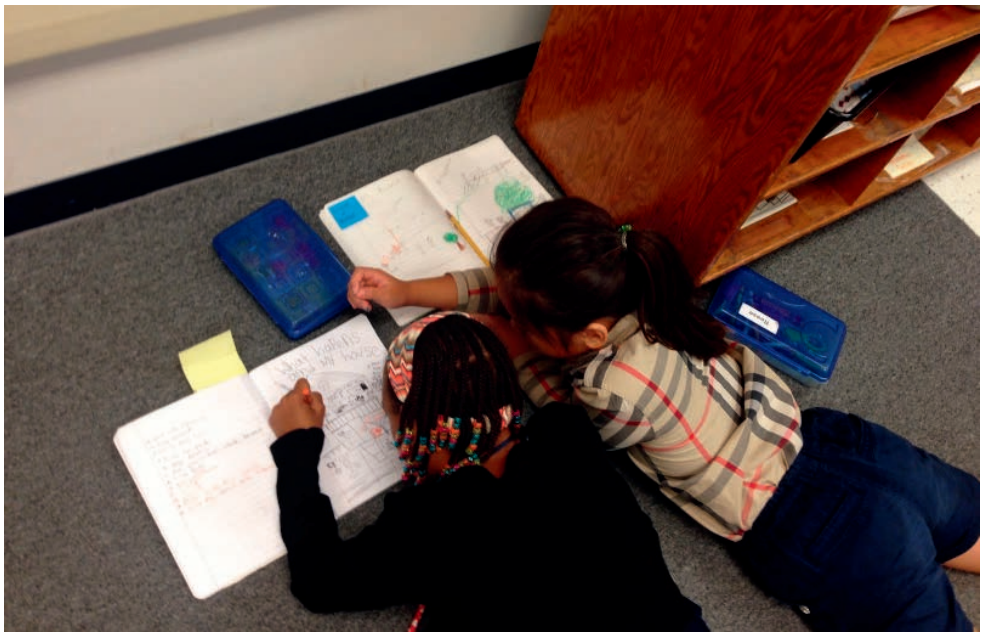
Benefits of Partnership

All of these themes, as well as our experiences inquiring about writing together and ultimately authoring a book together, point to the value of school university partnerships like PDS. Energy, listening, vulnerability, and accountability-- these things are not easy to maintain. Why go to the

trouble? There are easier ways to do teacher education, to be sure. But these four traits of energy, listening, vulnerability and accountability point us toward the benefits we see in PDS partnership. There are direct and immediate benefits, and then there are indirect or longer term benefits. And these benefits spread not only directly to the interns and those who work with them, but also to a wider community of the schools, the district, the university, the wider field of education, and our local community.

Direct benefit, for example, is in how well-prepared a set of candidates are by the time they graduate at the end of the year. It's in how the children this year have had an additional adult to support their learning. And it's in how teachers who served as mentors this year had the opportunity to grow themselves through mentoring a beginner. Those benefits to teacher candidates, kids, and teachers really matter, and those benefits accrue right away. But there are deeper and more transformative benefits that you can miss if you're not looking. And *these* benefits take some time and nurturing to develop. They are benefits expressed in the culture in which we work and learn.

Our own work together, culminating in the publication of *Teaching Writers to Reflect*, is an example of these indirect and longer term benefits. Think about all the things that had to be in place, in terms of an institutional culture, in order for this work to happen. Due to a culture of collaboration, nurtured in this partnership over 20 years, when the district introduced a peer coaching scheme, teachers were open to it. Deana and Colleen were two of those teachers, and that's how they started working together. Due to a culture of teacher leadership, nurtured in this partnership over 20 years, Colleen and Deana started trying all these new things in their writing instruction, like coteaching, but what's more, they felt the need to invite others in, to share it. Due to a culture of inquiry, nurtured in this partnership over 20 years, and due to a culture of teachers partnering with PSU faculty to conduct school-based research, nurtured in this partnership over 20 years, teachers and administrators knew Anne-- even though she has had no formal role in our PDS partnership-- and could nudge Deana and



Colleen to invite Anne in to see writing workshop. And due to a culture of vulnerability, nurtured in this partnership over 20 years, the three of us were able to come together as critical learning partners, with no set agenda other than seeking to discover what worked best for kids day to day.

Through all of those things, when you add up all of this energy, this culture of collaboration, of inquiry, of partnering, of teacher leadership, and of vulnerability, shared accountability.... All of this makes transformation possible for the benefit of the children who drive all of our work. For us to come together, we needed *all of this*, and to have *all of this* we needed the relationship, the PDS partnership, not just in name but in continued close engagement and trust, nurtured over these 20 years.

None of our work for the writers you see in our photos here, or the teaching strategies we developed together, or the book we co-authored, or the sessions and conversations we've had with colleagues nearby in professional learning sessions or afar in conference presentations, is directly related to the mentorship of teacher candidates in State College classrooms. And yet PDS makes it all possible, over all those years leading to here. When partnerships are nurtured, you get the direct benefit, but you also get an environment, a culture, that is RICH SOIL in which all kinds of "volunteer" seeds can grow.

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Deana Washell (dmw11@scasd.org) teaches in the State College Area School District.

Colleen McCracken (cmm49@scasd.org) teaches in the State College Area School District.

Anne Elrod Whitney (awhitney@psu.edu) teaches at the Pennsylvania State University.

Learners in K-12 The Future is Now: Meeting the Needs of English Schools

Rachel Smith, Loachapoka Elementary School (AL)
Mary McIlwain, Auburn University (AL)
Jamie Harrison, Auburn University (AL)

Loachapoka Elementary and High School and Auburn University are involved in an emerging professional development school partnership (PDSP), a relationship that began summer of 2018. Reading, ESOL, secondary English education and music education professors hold methods classes on our campus during the academic school year, as well as collaborate to provide summer programming. The effort is driven on the needs of our school as determined by administrators and parents. Needs include reading achievement; supporting English learners (ELs); access to music classes; and innovating curriculum to be culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and age appropriate through small group differentiation. Parents and administrators also highlight mental health, nutrition, safety, and the summer slide during summer months. The latter concerns are well documented in isolated rural areas throughout our country (Phillips et al., 2007). Our story that follows is a new, dynamic aspect of the partnership that we hope continues to grow in the coming years.

Our work reflects various aspects of the NAPDS Essentials 3, 4, and 5 (NAPDS, 2008). It is our hope that, as we share our story, readers are

able to validate and extend their understanding of these essentials in terms of their own work in their unique contexts. This is indeed in the spirit of essential five as we share our work with you "as a way of contributing to the educational dialogue." (NAPDS, 2008).

Background

This is my first year at Loachapoka Elementary School. I (Rachel) spent the first three years of my teaching experience at an affluent East Alabama private school that did not accommodate assignments for any student. The next two years were taught in Montgomery at a school with the highest population of English Learners (ELs) in the county. This allowed the opportunity for me to develop skills working with ELs alongside two full time teachers specializing in teaching English speakers of other languages (ESOL) at that school.

Alabama is documented as one of the top ten high EL growth states and the funding structure has not kept pace with the growth of the EL population (Horsford & Sampson, 2013). Our county exemplifies this stark situation. There are currently 170 ELs in the county with only two full time ESOL teachers to serve students enrolled in 14 schools across the district. One of these teachers is also the lead teacher for the entire county.

At Loachapoka Elementary, we serve students from preschool to sixth grade and are connected to our high school that hosts seventh through twelfth grades in rural east Alabama. The elementary school has three hundred forty eight students with 89% being children of color. Twenty-one percent of our students are Hispanic and several live in homes in which English is not the primary spoken language. Hispanic families within our county experience a range of socioeconomic realities. Some have founded thriving businesses while others are struggling for consistent work. Poverty and isolation are among several factors that affect the families of this community.

Our school illustrates the county's, and nation's, struggle to support reading development of ELs. With only 15-19% of our total school population reaching reading proficiency each year, the question of how to help our ELs become the most successful they can be, started to circulate with colleagues and our partner school Auburn University. This question was the basis of setting up the professional learning community (PLC) to try to find the answer, to help our students succeed, and to better prepare teacher candidates for the classroom.

Classroom Environment

I teach fourth grade. Our grade level departmentalizes so I teach three rotating home rooms reading and language arts. I have a total of forty five students throughout the day with thirteen to sixteen students per class. When the year started, five of the forty five were reading on a fourth grade level and four were close to grade level according to Star Reading. By mid-year five students tested on grade level and nine students tested into the on watch level. I have ten students with Individualized English Education Plans (IELPs). Of those, two students were level 1 on the ACCESS for ELLs test and the other eight were level two or three. Three of my ELs read on grade level, one is reading close to grade level, four are below grade level, and two are in the severely below grade level category.

We have a 90 minute, uninterrupted block for two classes of students for reading, writing, and grammar. We also have thirty minutes of reading intervention time with students divided between the three fourth grade teachers based on specific skills. The last block's instruction is split with specials in the middle of class time.

My collaboration with Mary Jane McIlwain, a Reading Education professor, began a semester before we formed the PLC. Her reading methods course was taught on the Loachapoka school campus, and they joined me for my second rotation of students. Teacher candidates observed Mary Jane and I co-teach a mini-lesson and then they supported independent work while she and I circulated to coach students and candidates as they worked. She then took the undergraduate students back to the college classroom at our school to reflect on what worked and what needed to change. Afterward, Mary Jane and I reflected and planned the lesson we were going to co-teach the following week. Ways to support EL students was always a priority in our discussions, which led us to form the PLC with Jamie Harrison, the ESOL Education professor at Auburn.

Professional Learning Community Activities

Each week Mary Jane, Jamie, and I (Rachel) meet to discuss the previous week and look at lessons for the upcoming weeks. We use a learning cycle we call "plan, do, reflect, change" to guide our shared learning. Learning cycles are inherent in essential four and are powerful ways in which teachers work together in a specific context to help all students learn (West Ed., 2018). An innovation in our use of learning cycles is the way it is strengthening Loachapoka-Auburn University PDS partnership. Not only are teachers learning from one another as we put "best practices" to work in our classrooms, but university faculty and teacher candidates are learning with us.

Each meeting, we look at how students responded to different supports, areas they are thriving in and areas they are struggling to grasp. Ideas are given for upcoming assignments for ways to make them more accessible for ELs while not losing the challenge of the reading standards for Alabama students. These meetings have led to including a language objective for the students posted in the classroom, having student-created word banks for sorts, and setting sentence stems for the students to use. Each week includes looking at which supports need to be changed for future lessons on similar standards and reteaching opportunities.

We then look through upcoming lessons and add in scaffolding and support to help students succeed to the best of their abilities. We look at each objective and break down the language used to make it understandable. We also breakdown the language students will need to have to be able to complete the standard. At this point the most successful supports for students have been using word banks, sentence stems, and having visual aids to help better understand the stories being read.

My school uses a program called Bundles that was developed by teachers in our system to group the reading, writing, and grammar standards together similarly to how they would appear on standardized tests. One Bundle that we worked to accommodate was focused on reading literature: explain major differences between poetry, drama, and prose and refer to the structural elements of poems (verse, meter, rhythm). This standard we broke into studying poetry for a week focusing on using visuals to help understand the poems and anchor charts made to look like an IPad with the different relevant terms being the apps you could pick to break down the parts of a poem. Then we focused on comparing poetry to prose by looking back at stories we had read throughout the year.

The students used Venn diagrams to help sort their thinking. This created the opportunity for me to start the word bank with paragraph, stanza, story, and rhythm. The students sorted these words into poetry or prose and got to have discussions on where each word goes. The students then added the words meaning, verse, characters and meter to our list of words.

Sorting and discussing terms in pairs led to whole group discussions on using the sentence stems, "Poems and prose are alike because . . .". Or "Poems and prose are different because . . .". Some of the words were easier for students to decide on when they were on the anchor charts but others like meaning or story took longer to decide where to place them. The next week we started using readers theatre to look at drama.

We went back to Venn diagrams to compare and contrast poetry and dramas. The students started with words like dialogue, scene, stanza, and verse. After sorting the words, we added story, theme, rhythm and pictures. Once we had finished we discussed where the words should be placed. We used the sentence stems "Drama is like poetry because… but it is like prose because…" and "Drama is not like poetry but is like prose because…".

The sentence stems mimicked what the students would need on their bundles test open response questions to allow students to practice both with a partner and independently before their test. When the students are given a sentence stem, I see higher levels of participation in my EL students conversing with their partners. I also see and hear them using the anchor charts to choose words to add to the sentence stems. Giving students having more practice answering open ended questions verbally then writing the answers

improved summative assessment scores when comparing specific poems to drama.

Points to Consider

As NAPDS essential four details, each person involved in this PLC is increasing understanding about the implementation of these practices. Below we each explain how the PLC impacted our practices as a practicing teacher and as professors preparing future teachers.

Rachel Smith - Teacher

Each week, after discussing what went well and what could have gone better, I was left able to reflect on how to improve as a teacher. This led to discussion points and research into best practices for different topics and standards. The PLC also chose to focus on what students can do based on WIDA scores and what the students were showing in the classroom. Starting small with teacher created word banks, I was then able to have the students work together to build a word bank to sort. The word banks could then be used as word sorts in centers. The sentence stems were a way to help ELs feel more comfortable in turn-and-talk situations which built their comfort levels in sharing with the whole class. With each standard I worked to push what was already being implemented in the classroom a little further in helping to support and challenge my students to become better readers.

Jamie Harrison - English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Education

The PDS relationship allows us to rely on the practicing teacher to inform the guidance that we give. This is really important from a teacher educator perspective as it prioritizes the experiences of the teacher rather than the abstract nature of "best practices" or English language proficiency test scores. The teacher knows her students, she sees on a daily basis what they can do and how they respond in a variety of interactive contexts. Test scores on the other hand, give us a snapshot picture of a moment in time for this student, and depending upon the circumstances of testing (computer-based testing) may not always accurately represent their actual abilities.

In the context of the PDS relationship, the process of support for ELs is organic and builds upon what is already happening to build an equitable classroom environment for ELs. The goal is to build capacity from week to week so that scaffolds and supports such as increased visuals, sentence stems and word banks become part of the teacher's automatic repertoire. Starting from the foundational skill of determining language objectives is an essential component of this capacity-building process.

Mary Jane McIlwain - Reading Education Professor

Two considerations bubbled up while debriefing with my students in the fall, each of which I shared with teacher candidates, Rachel, and Jamie. First, how do you work EL scaffolds into the techniques efficiently? Candidates and I played with sentence stems, visuals and total body response during interactive read alouds and shared readings. The time it takes to do this work is problematic. Creating the PLC including Jamie and learning cycles generates efficiency, effectiveness, and builds momentum and intentionality.

This semester, teacher candidates and I work with Susan Ray, a third grade teacher. Everything I am learning from knowing Rachel's students and my continued work with Rachel and Jamie influences my work with Susan, as well as the teacher candidates that are learning with me in her classroom. The PLC within our PDSP is creating a seamless path to "in time" learning for students, teachers, candidates and university faculty as we work to create equity for our EL students.

The second consideration is productively framing the tension between standardized test scores (representing what policy writers call "rigor") and meeting ELs where they are. Rachel seems empowered as she reflects on how ELs at varying ELP levels are responding to scaffolds; and I take this with me as I work with Susan and my undergraduate students. We are developing a sort of shared empowerment or collective efficacy to frame that tension productively. We better understand how to celebrate and value the small steps that create continuous progress for our students as they work toward "mastering a standard." We are learning that our efforts are about creating equity for all students as we collaborate in a real classroom with a real teacher and real students. It is their lives that create our reality whether our individual identities label us as student, teacher candidate, teacher, or researcher.

Next Steps

Finding scaffolds for ELs that transfer to a variety of instructional techniques is important work to be shared between researchers and practitioners and is pertinent to essential three. In my room, these techniques are interactive read aloud, shared reading, guided reading and centers. Most of our attention has been on interactive read alouds, shared reading, and centers. This is where we are growing our work in essential three into essential four as we increase the number of participants in our PLC and also push to learn more about various techniques used in reading instruction. Mary Jane and Jamie will be leading a year-long PD focused on EL support and guided reading next year. I wonder how sentence stems, word banks, and visual aids will transfer to guided reading.

Also indicative of essentials three and four, the plan is to work PLCs like ours into the PD mix. We are already headed in that direction as Susan is joining our weekly meetings. I know that having the opportunity to work with Susan in the PLC will strengthen the third to fourth grade transition. We developed a natural way of understanding all of our students, ELs in particular, and the undergraduate students. It is validating to see the growth in all of them. Also, we will be able to share our experiences with our colleagues through the guided reading PD developed.

Implications and Recommendations

It remains our hope that readers are able to validate and extend their own collaborative practices within their PDSPs (especially those related to essentials three, four, and five) by reading our story. The EL scaffolds (posted language objectives, student generated word banks, sentence stems) we use to teach reading in fourth grade transfer to all grades and content areas. However, how these and other "best practices" fit any particular context is always a variable needing to be addressed by the learning communities in that very context. Let us all, preK-12 teachers and professors, create learning communities intimate enough to adapt practices to the nuances of our children and their families. Incorporate learning cycles into these communities to increase flexibility and intentionality about determining focus, collecting data (whether it be through student assessment or anecdotal reports) and adding it to the conversation. Together we can build perspective and strengthen our respective partnerships.

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Rachel Smith (smith.rachel@lee.k12.al.us) is a seventh year teacher. She has experience in both public and private schools.

Mary Jane McIlwain is an assistant professor in reading education at Auburn University. Her research interests include language development, emergent literacy and teacher efficacy in underserved areas.

Jamie Harrison is an associate professor of ESOL Education at Auburn University. Her research focuses on teacher beliefs and the role of ESOL teacher as advocate.

Teacher Candidates in the Instructional Coaching Cycle: Exploration of an Innovative Professional Development School Model (iPDS)

Abby Morgan, Shawnee Mission School District (KS)
Pamela Lewis, Shawnee Mission School District (KS)
Tonnie Martinez, Kansas State University.(KS)

Teacher coaching has emerged as an effective alternative to traditional forms of professional development (Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan, 2016). Researchers have studied instructional coaching models and found a positive influence on teacher efficacy and student outcomes (Scher & O'Reilly, 2009; Yoon et al., 2007). Yet there is little mention in any of the literature of including teacher candidates in the coaching process. Using the example of a Professional Development School (PDS) partnership between Kansas State University College of Education (KSUCOE) and the Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD), this article highlights the potential of utilizing instructional coaches in mentoring student teachers by describing an innovative Professional Development School (iPDS) model that has been mutually beneficial for both partners, and how this important educator development tool aligns with Standard 4 of the National Professional Development School Model: *A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants*.

The Partners

Kansas State University College of Education

The KSUCOE established a Professional Development School model in 1989 on the premise that education should be viewed as a continuum from early childhood through university and that significant improvements in one part of the system are not possible without improvements throughout. Based on this premise, the vision of this model was and still is to collaboratively improve the College of Education's teacher preparation program while simultaneously reforming K-12 education for all students and educators within the partnership. To do so, the partnership capitalizes on the collaborative inclinations, experiences, and needs of the many educational partners in the community to demonstrate how to help all K-16 students achieve high academic standards. (Yahnke & Shroyer 2014). Traditionally, PDS school partnerships involve local schools providing placements for teaching interns to spend a semester turning theory into practice and application as they complete practice teaching. However, KSUCOE enrollment in teacher education is represented predominantly by students from the greater Kansas City area, over one hundred miles away from the main campus. For various reasons, including candidates' desire to live at home to save money, the college's technological capacities for distance supervision and the opportunity for students to be placed in an innovative school setting, the time was right for expanding the program into a distance model for clinical placements in Kansas City. The college had a strong desire to stretch the capacities of the current, local model and with an opportunity for placements in the Shawnee Mission School District's new Apache Innovative School, iPDS was born.

Apache Innovative School

In 2016, SMSD transitioned Apache Elementary School from a traditional model to an "innovative school" model that gave teachers more flexibility in scheduling, students a more personalized education experience, and the district a place to identify best practices to spread to the rest of its schools. The goal of Apache Innovative School (ApacheIS) is to provide an innovative elementary school setting for students enrolled within its highly diverse attendance boundaries. The ApacheIS focus is on increasing student achievement and preparing students to be college and career ready while serving as a professional learning model school for the district.

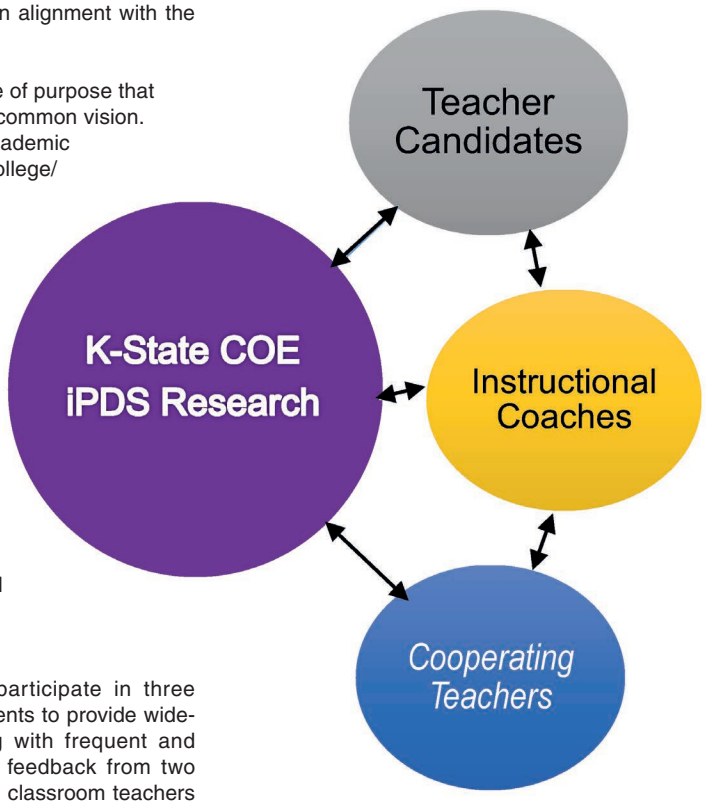
The SMSD utilizes the Rigor and Relevance Framework, developed by Willard Daggett (2005), that identifies five key themes in establishing rigorous and relevant learning experiences for ALL students. Innovative practices continue to be implemented in the SMSD in alignment with the five themes:

- Leadership: A clear sense of purpose that empowers staff toward a common vision.
- High Expectations: For academic performance as well as college/career readiness.
- Relationships: Valuing relationships as part of a successful learning environment.
- Student Opportunities: Both academic experiences and personal skill development opportunities.
- Professional Culture: Teachers, administrators, and staff collaborate toward shared goals.

The iPDS Model

All KSUCOE candidates participate in three distinct PDS school placements to provide wide-ranging experiences along with frequent and sustained supervision and feedback from two levels of mentorship: trained classroom teachers and university supervisors. Unique to the iPDS model are four layers of feedback: The KSUCOE supervisor, the SMSD Director of Elementary Education, the ApacheIS instructional coaches, and the classroom mentor teachers. This four-pronged approach places a great value on the benefits of collective planning and decision making as well as participation in research and inquiry about best practices for teaching and teacher education through research, reflection, and relationships with students and their families. (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2011).

The iPDS model has become integrated into the ApacheIS leadership mission. ApacheIS is a training ground for future leaders in the district to serve in teacher leader, innovation specialist, instructional coaching, and administrative roles. All teachers at ApacheIS are expected to serve as mentors for teacher candidates with an awareness of ways to engage them in the art and heart of teaching from day one. Candidates experience common grade level collaboration time with colleagues, high-functioning professional learning communities, instructional coaching cycles, innovative instructional practices and extended professional learning opportunities. Professional learning targets hands-on instructional strategies for academic learning as well as direct instruction



The iPDS Model.

Table 1: Extended Professional Learning Opportunities

Vertical looping	Project based learning	Project Lead the Way and STEM Education
Daily morning meetings	Collaborative planning with Response to Intervention (RtI)	Individual learning plans and goal setting
Trauma Smart training and Social Emotional Needs	Technology Integration	Relationships and communication with parents

to increase students' social-emotional skills. Teacher candidates are exposed to and engaged in extended opportunities that include the following (Table 1)

Co-Teaching Model

Both iPDS partner institutions utilize a co-teaching model. The primary feature of a co-teaching model is the collaboration of two or more teachers on the planning, delivery, and authentic assessment of teaching and learning. (Davis, 1995, Sandholtz, 2000, Crow and Smith, 2005, Carpenter et al., 2007). Each semester, the university supervisor, the SMSD district and building administrators, instructional coaches, teacher candidates and their mentor teachers come together to review co-teaching implementation guidelines. Then the iPDS structure is described for the mentor teachers and teacher candidates. The instructional coaches share their expertise and expectations of a reflective dialogue loop in which they will model-teach, the mentor teacher and candidate will implement and the instructional coach will provide both the teacher and teacher candidate with the opportunity to look critically at their own teaching practices and continuously improve. The university supervisor becomes part of the feedback loop through monthly classroom visits, conferences with candidates, and distance supervision through technology.

Distance and On-site Supervision

Teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate their teaching abilities on the first days at ApacheIS. They utilize one-to-one technology to video capture their teaching opportunities in small group interventions and whole class opportunities. Candidates are required to provide two formal, face-to-face lessons for the instructional coaches, three for their mentor teacher, and upload at least five teaching samples to the cloud for the supervisor. Video samples are uploaded to a cloud and the university supervisor, instructional coaches, and teacher candidates have access to the videos and work together to provide effective feedback and professional expertise. Video samples are also required for the student teaching portfolio required by KSUCOE as the capstone project for student teaching completion.

Benefits of the Model

University Benefits

The KSUCOE places a great value on the benefits of collective planning and decision making in the iPDS model as well as participating in research and inquiry about best practices for teaching and teacher education. Each month, a university supervisor checks in with key stakeholders on site: The district elementary education coordinator, building administrators, instructional coaches, mentor teachers and teacher candidates all provide feedback. Classroom visits enhance reflection on the model and provide innovative examples to enhance teacher education curriculum and development programs in the college. The flexibility of the model is demonstrated when changes are made in the teacher preparation program based on partner input. For example, the instructional coaches called a meeting with KSUCOE and SMSD partner administrators and indicated the teacher candidates were waiting until too late in the semester to make requests for the instructional coaches and mentor teachers to do their observations. To complicate matters for the instructional coaches, teachers throughout the building were also requesting coaching observations. In a collaborative spirit, stakeholders decided to prioritize a more realistic timeline with mile markers to guide instructional coaches, mentor teachers and teacher candidates in strategic ways. In addition, the instructional coaches committed to designing specific professional development for the teacher candidates in preparation for their anticipated hiring by SMSD. Training topics in classroom management, behavior supports, research-based strategies in blended learning and technology integration are reported back to the KSUCOE Chair of Curriculum and Instruction and provide examples of current needs for candidates as they progress through the state department of education's required program of study. This continuous feedback loop has led to co-construction of curricular changes and observation protocols, benefitting all stakeholders and contributing to KSUCOE accreditation artifacts required by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standard 2, Clinical Partnerships and Practice.

District Benefits

The close collaboration between SMSD and university personnel allows for early identification of teacher candidates in the iPDS program who demonstrate skills and dispositions that are a good fit for an early hiring process in the district. Candidates participate in a fall interview event and may be identified for the accelerated track of round two interviews with building principals. Many candidates have been hired immediately upon graduation in long-term substitute roles or in some cases, to take over a classroom of their own. The iPDS experience enhances candidates' chances for hiring by SMSD as they are pre-wired with an understanding of district initiatives, guidelines, and policies such as:

- An understanding of district curriculum maps, priority standards and assessment practices.
- Experience in using district resources to lead instruction.
- A philosophy of teaching the whole child with training and application of social emotional instruction
- Buy-in to the effectiveness of Professional Learning Communities and the power of teacher collaboration in meeting the needs of students
- A professional network of support from relationships built through the intern experience

SMSD coaches have been able to design, implement, and formalize protocols for the ApacheIS coaching cycle based on the professional learning aspects of iPDS. These documents and procedures benefit all aspects of a coaching cycle that includes a pre-conference form, pre-conference dialogue, classroom observation, and a post-observation conference. This formal process happens four times during the semester, twice with the instructional coaches and twice with the mentor teachers. Five teaching videos are uploaded to a cloud for KSUCOE supervisors for additional feedback. An instructional coach at ApacheIS shared her perspective on continued professional learning as coaches, teachers and candidates pose and answer questions about professional practices and benefit from each other's feedback:

> It gives us the opportunity to hone our own craft. For example, when we are reinforcing the importance of reflection on teaching with an intern, the mentor teacher is reminded of the importance of reflection on their teaching. Right now, interns are so concerned about getting the lesson out there and taught, they aren't giving themselves opportunities to reflect. My job is to ask those reflective questions over and over and then give the interns time to learn. Hopefully when they are out there on their own, they are asking themselves those questions and strengthening their professional practices. We want to emphasize that we are all learning as professionals all the time. (Instructional Coach "A", November 18, 2019)

Teacher Benefits

The ApacheIS teachers serving in mentor roles as cooperating teachers are given an opportunity to develop leadership skills through mentoring and positively influence their buildings and the district. Mentor teachers not only grow instructionally from guiding and sharing their professional practices with teacher candidates, but also professionally. Mentors connect teacher candidates to curriculum resources, model peer-to-peer feedback and

develop a professional relationship that supports them as they transition to their own classroom. Having a role as a mentor teacher isn't just for a semester, it's a commitment to the profession and the success of others embarking on the teaching journey. Many cooperating teachers realize professional fulfillment from serving in this leadership role and become instructional coaches, curriculum cadre members and pursue a career in administration after serving in this capacity.

ApacheIS teachers have strong feelings about the benefits and contributions of teacher candidates in their classrooms. They strive not only to support candidate development, but indicate a realization that the supportive relationships they are building may very well be with their future co-teacher, grade level or content partner, strengthening learning communities for students. As one mentor teacher shared, "The individual attention and small group support we can provide together makes such an impact on student academic growth. This is another caring adult forming relationships with my students and supporting them academically, socially and emotionally." (Teacher "D", February 1, 2019).

At the time of the mentor teacher interviews, teachers at ApacheIS were participating in bi-weekly Trauma Smart training. Candidates were invited to participate with their mentor teachers in the training. Mentor teachers emphasized the benefits of participating together with teacher candidates:

> "I try to reinforce to my intern that we did not get this type of training when we were in college and how valuable it is for working with the student populations in our classrooms. As she and I discuss what we are learning in the trainings in the context of our students, we are both becoming trauma-informed teachers."
>
> (Teacher "F", February 3, 2019)

Her colleague echoed the benefit of mentor teacher-teacher candidate collaboration as well as opportunities for reciprocal learning, "The collaboration between the cooperating teacher and the intern is invaluable. I learn as much from my interns as they learn from me. (Teacher "G", February 3, 2019). Her colleague echoed the professional growth that occurs when participating as a mentor teacher:

> Serving as a mentor teacher has been a wonderful learning experience. It has helped me become a more thoughtful teacher because of the continuous dialogue about student learning the semester provided. We ended each day talking about the whys, next steps and celebrations. The Candidates bring enthusiasm and energy that is contagious and invigorates us personally and Professionally. (Teacher "H", February 3, 2019)

Teacher H exemplified how the investment of time and energy into the mentor relationship can pay off. The candidate she mentored in the prior semester was hired by the district and now serves as her grade level partner and teaches next door.

Teacher Candidate Benefits

The iPDS partnership has prepared and placed 27 teachers in the SMSD over the past four years. The iPDS candidates-turned teachers were given an opportunity to reflect back on their time in the iPDS model and share their perspectives. One common theme in the interviews was a philosophy of continuous improvement as a professional emphasized by the Instructional Coaches:

> Being able to utilize Instructional Coaches as an intern was amazing. I'm not nervous when somebody comes in to see me teach because it was a constant at ApacheIS. There was always an Instructional Coach coming in--there was somebody always in the room watching--somebody was always giving feedback and always giving us that opportunity to grow because there's always room for improvement no matter if you're teaching 10 years or day one. (personal communication, Teacher "A", February 1, 2019)

Another theme was an emphasis on co-teaching and peer feedback.

> What was really exciting for me was that we had a lot of opportunities to work together to co-teach. If I had questions as I planned, I could send a quick e-mail or go up and see them and boom, they would have ten ideas for me to try. We have an incredible coach in my building and at first she would say, "Oh, sorry, is this a bad time, and I was like, No, come in, because I was so used to having coaching at ApacheIS. I wanted her to come in. I was used to having a revolving door of coaching and feedback. (personal communication, Teacher "B", February 1, 2019)

The final example captures an element of readiness teacher candidates have after participation in the iPDS model.

> The instructional Coaches were a good liaison between the college, the district, and us--teaching us things that we needed to know to go into our career paths here. At semester, one of the teachers left so I was able to come in and take over the classroom. So now I have a classroom of my very own which is crazy to think that just a semester ago I was student teaching and now I have 20 kids who I love so much and I get so excited to come to school every day and teach them. (personal communication, Teacher "C", February 6, 2019)

The literature supports the likelihood of a positive student teaching experience carrying over to a positive first year teaching experience and the importance of innovation within that experience. (Zeichner, 1990; Montebon, 2015). These three voices were echoed by other graduates of the model and point to the strength of iPDS for producing collaborative, confident and reflective early career teachers in the district.

Conclusion

The genesis of the iPDS model lies squarely inside NAPDS Essential 4, A *shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants.* The model, now in its sixth semester, provides a context for including teacher candidates in the coaching cycle. Positive outcomes for partners, instructional coaches, teachers, and teacher candidates have strengthened commitment to the model. Current partnership dialogue surrounding iPDS includes expansion of the model to secondary grade levels as well as studying the delivery mechanism of coaching via distance technology. These efforts provide opportunities for continued validation of both the iPDS model and NAPDS Essential 4.

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Abby Morgan (abbymorgan@smsd.org) a former K-6 teacher, is an Instructional Coach at Shawnee Mission School District.

Pamela Lewis is a former K-6 teacher, administrator, and now Director of Elementary Services at Shawnee Mission School District.

Tonnie Martinez,,former 9-12 ELA teacher, now as Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Kansas State University.

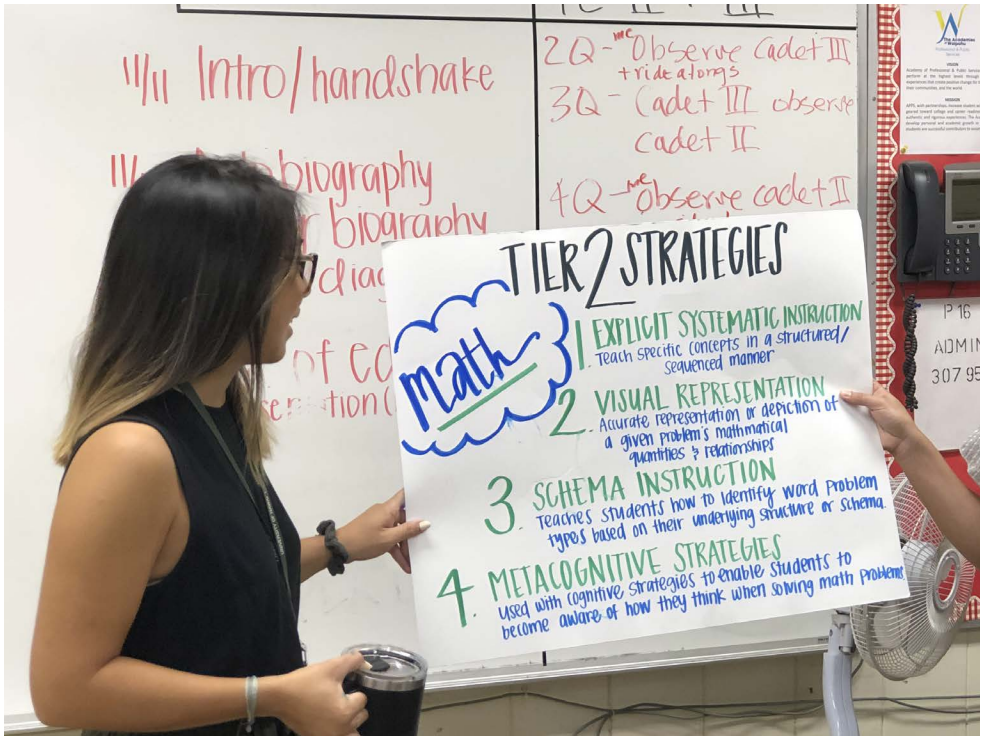
Trainees to Trainers: Teacher Candidates Coach Future Teachers in RTI

Joyce Bajet, Waipahu High School (HI)
Vail Matsumoto, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (HI)
Janet Kim, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (HI)

What began as a casual remark at an advisory board meeting at Professional Development School (PDS) partner, Waipahu High School (WHS), ended with a simple, two sentence email, reading: "That was great! Can we do this again next year?" The impromptu idea evolved into PDS teacher candidates having a direct and lasting impact on the high school students interested in teaching, who are referred to as Teacher Cadets. These Teacher Cadets have declared their interest in the profession of teaching and are enrolled in the Academy for Professional and Personal Services, which houses the Teacher Academy. This Teacher Academy exists within the PDS, but up until recently, had not been connected in any significant way, despite the natural fit. That is, until the casual remark.

The connection that was created between the teacher candidates and the cadets capitalized on the foundational idea that learning is solidified when the material or concepts are taught to others. A study examining the influence of teaching on learning indicated that students internalize and learn new content better when they are expected to teach it to others. Fiorella and Mayer (2014) found that engaging in the process of transitioning from trainee to trainer provides "a learning strategy that promotes meaningful learning over time" (p. 81).

These trainees-cum-trainers made up a cohort of 19 general education University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) teacher candidates, including elementary and secondary candidates in various content areas. All of these candidates were placed in PDS Waipahu Complex schools and were in their first semester of the program. Their course load included a Special Education class that covered an array of issues, strategies, and topics including Response to Intervention (RTI).



As part of a field-based program, candidates are always asked to translate what they are learning in class to their fieldwork experiences. After building a foundation for RTI in their course and in the field experience, the candidates seemed ready for the next step. The problem was that there wasn't a next step clearly delineated. Enter the PDS Teacher Cadets.

The Teacher Academy at WHS is comprised of a classroom teacher, a resource teacher, and 30 Teacher Cadets, ranging from sophomores to seniors. These high school students take a series of scaffolded courses that eventually become field-based and include volunteer work in the complex PDS schools. The cadets begin with visiting schools in the community once a week in their first year. By the time they are seniors, they are observing and participating in the field up to three days a week. They are provided with a variety of field experiences including early childhood, special education resource room, general education elementary, middle school, and various disciplines in high school, based on their interests.

While the cadets learn general education theory and strategies, their toolkit does not include a robust foundation in Special Education. This gap became the next step for the teacher candidates and their work with RTI while also serving as a catalyst to build the direct connection between the teacher candidates and teacher cadets within the PDS. This model advances the shared commitment of innovation and reflective practice (NAPDS, 2008) by expanding the continuum one step further; in this new continuum, the university faculty and veteran teachers share the knowledge base of RTI with the teacher candidates, who then interpret and use the new knowledge to train the teacher cadets.

In this trainee to trainer endeavor, the candidates were tasked with designing a three-hour session for the Teacher Cadets that would engage, educate, and excite them about using RTI interventions to increase student success. Meanwhile, the WHS instructors in the PDS carved out time to prep the cadets with RTI readings. Following the session, the Teacher Academy instructors devoted time in class to discussing RTI and having the cadets collaborate on the various ways they would use what they learned in their field placements. In the end, the partnership between UHM and WHS along with the PDS candidates' and the cadets' skills were all strengthened in one fell swoop.

Using the 'learning by teaching' strategy significantly increased subjects' motivation to learn and invest more effort during the learning process (Fiorelli & Mayer, 2014). By engaging the teacher candidates in a role that asked them to teach the content to the younger teacher cadets, they were able to better internalize and commit to engaging in the material as they were relearning it themselves. PDS candidate Aisha Watson provided evidence of this commitment when she shared, "We took into consideration the cadets' learner development. We decided that since they are high schoolers, we should present with a fun and relatable approach- casual delivery, with pop culture references, sprinkled with brain breaks and sponge activities." This collaborative enterprise was taken on with gusto by the candidates, who looked forward to working with a different audience and took special pride in knowing that these lessons would be far-reaching and prepare future teachers, who would then become a reflection of them. Creating an authentic opportunity for teacher candidates to share pedagogical practice with the cadets built a collective feeling of pride in the profession. This pride was married with an eagerness to inspire the next generation of teachers and a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice (NAPDS, 2008) which was demonstrated throughout the process.

The RTI session that was executed was a combination of content and best practices, as the candidates believed it was important for the cadets to have the opportunity to learn through engaging activities. The day began with the UHM candidates greeting the cadets and an icebreaker to quickly build rapport and establish the tone for the day. The cadets were

broken into groups and led through four stations that covered tiers 1, 2, 3, along with universal screening. The high school future teachers enjoyed the stations as each one incorporated a different activity that could be added to their toolbelt. Their evaluations revealed things like: "They were very in-depth with the explanation of the tiers and the universal screening" and "You guys will be amazing teachers someday! Keep inspiring!"

Peppered throughout the session were scheduled brain breaks, where both candidates and cadets participated in short, kinesthetic activities that were fun and promoted healthy behavior such as gentle tapping of the shoulders and forearms, getting in line by birthday, and competitive activities using body language. One cadet wrote, "I really like the brain breaks, kept us all energized. Having the brain breaks was a great idea."

While this candidate-designed and executed RTI session was only three hours long, the cadets found much value in it as evidenced in their overwhelmingly positive evaluations. "Even better," said candidate Kelsey Coleman, "I had several students approach me personally to thank me or tell me how much they enjoyed our presentation, which means we made a lasting impression and hopefully had a positive impact."

When reflecting on their performance, many of the teacher candidates shared a renewed sense of enthusiasm for the profession based on the high schoolers' passion. Celebrating their success in the moment and for the future was important for candidates like Watson, who wrote, "I hope that the workshop provided clarity for the teacher cadets that wondered about the details of teaching to students' needs, and that our passion and enthusiasm for teaching strengthened their desire to become future teachers."

Several of the high school students shared the sentiment of being inspired by other future teachers who share the same passion. Others recognized that the information from the session would better equip them for the field and noted that they were looking forward to using what they learned in their own field placements within the PDS. Researchers have emphasized that successful implementation of RTI begins with more advanced preparation within general education teacher preparation programs (Brownell, Sindelar, Kiely, & Danielson, 2010). This approach to building RTI practices and skills across the university-school-candidate-cadet continuum provides a strengthened culture and commitment to the effective preparation of current and future educators across the PDS (NAPDS, 2008).

In the end, UHM candidate Brice Namnama, happily noted, "The school benefited because the cadets learned something new and they all left happy; and the community benefited because these cadets may one day be teachers who can use this process in their own classrooms." This brought the cycle full-circle; that is, until next year.

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Joyce Bajet (joyce.bajet@k12.hi.us) is a School Improvement Resource Teacher at Waipahu High School. She also serves as one of the PDS Liaisons for the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa.

Vail Matsumoto is an assistant professor in the Institute for Teacher Education at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa. Her research interests include teacher preparation, PDS/University partnerships, and teacher leadership.

Janet Kim is a Special Education Recruitment Advisor and PhD student at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa. She has a BEd in Elementary Special Education and MEd in Educational Foundations.

Action Research in a Professional Development School: A Pre-service teacher's path to understanding

Carole Ann Salbx, Polk County Schools (FL)
Emily O'Brien, Florida Southern College
Diane LaFrance, Florida Southern College
Jason LaFrance, Florida Southern College

Introduction

This article describes the process of action research and what pre-service teachers learned by utilizing this practice in a pre-K classroom under the supervision of university faculty and practicing teachers. By learning about action research within the professional development school setting, the pre-service teachers were able to utilize this theoretical model to reflect on their behaviors and experiences in the classroom, intentionally make instructional decisions, and improve their practice. This action research was part of an institutional summer research grant.

The two NAPDS "essentials" that influenced this work are #2: A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community; and #4: A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants.

Pre-service Teacher Background

Carole Ann

Since starting my time at Florida Southern, I had been in six clinical experiences. During each experience, I gained confidence, knowledge, and important skills needed of a teacher. I was also able to see many different classroom management styles, which taught me how to be successful in the classroom. Working with cooperating teachers gave me several mentors and connections with educators. I gained supportive advice from my cooperating teachers, as well as learned the type of teacher I hope to be. Conducting research with Dr. Diane LaFrance allowed me to continue learning and provided me with the chance to put my knowledge to practice in a clinical setting. Studying action research gave me the tools I need to be a teacher leader and learn how to conduct educational research effectively. I believe this experience made me a better-equipped and well-rounded pre-service teacher and future educator. Through this experience, I learned how to be an educational researcher. This will be especially useful as I look for jobs in the future as it sets me apart from my peers. I plan to continue action research when I have my own classroom and I believe this experience was a great place to start.

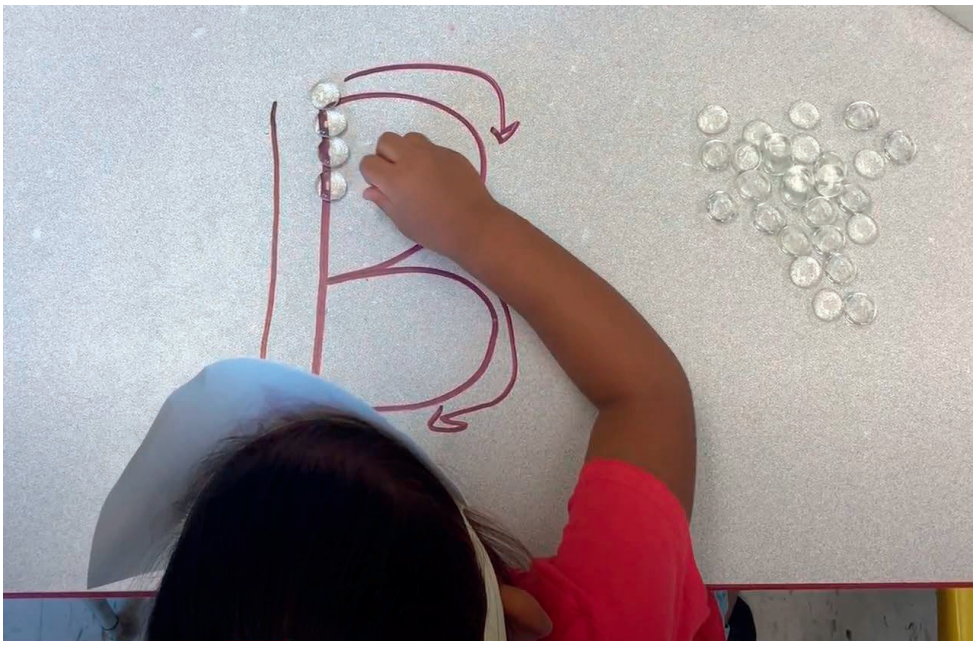
Emily

Over the last two and a half years at Florida Southern, I have been in three clinical experiences and am in my fourth this semester. From each clinical I gained invaluable experience in the classroom, confidence as a teacher, and many skills. Being exposed to so many different classrooms and cooperating teachers has shown me what I need in order to be a successful educator. I made connections with many educators, and received wonderful advice that has helped me reflect upon the type of teacher I would like to be. Conducting research with Dr. Diane LaFrance gave me the opportunity to grow as a pre-service teacher. By studying action research, I gained valuable tools and knowledge on how to effectively conduct action research. This would make me better equipped and prepared as a pre-service teacher. I also gained the skill and

experience of sorting and coding data, which is extremely useful for an educational researcher. I hope to continue learning more about action research while in my own classroom and this research experience provided a wonderful foundation for me to build upon.

PDS Context

The beginning partnership between the professional development school and a small, rural, religiously affiliated private college allowed for this educational opportunity to occur. The partnership between the college and the lab school began the semester before this research began. The professional development school serves not only the community but also helps prepare future educators. The lab school has a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practices and works with the university not only during the academic year but also during the summer. This study took place in the summer program that served forty-one students. Collaboration occurred between two full-time teachers, two full-time college faculty members, and two pre-service teachers.



The study included two female, pre-service teachers that were enrolled in an elementary education program in a small private college in Central Florida. The two pre-service teachers completed their junior year of a four-year program. During this study, the two pre-service teachers worked for six weeks at the school's Early Learning Lab that is a professional development school. During this time, the pre-service teachers learned about action research and worked with students on letter recognition.

Action Research Process

pre-service teachers can engage in action research, which is a disciplined process of inquiry, to improve as teachers and understand their professional practice. While Lewin (1946) is often credited for conceptualizing action research, other researchers such as Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014) have sought to refine the process. The spiral of action research that Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014) introduced includes developing a plan, implementing the plan (act), systematically observing the results, and reflecting on the results. The process of going through these steps is cyclical. Once the last step is reached, the process starts again. The following sections discuss each stage of the process of action research as described by Putman and Rock (2018) and our experiences utilizing the process. Often, the steps of this process were integrated with multiple stages occurring concurrently. For example, implementing the plan (act) and systematically observing results occurred at the same time. This can be seen in our description of each of the stages.

The first stage of the action research process is the planning stage. During this stage, it is the researcher's responsibility to gather data concerning an issue he or she wishes to solve and devise a flexible method of resolving the issue. A crucial aspect of action research is the ability to adapt the plan and process as needed, therefore allowing the researcher the ability to adapt to any unforeseen challenges or circumstances, and it ensures that all data gathered is accurate (Putnam & Rock, 2018).

Once we began our work in the PDS Learning Lab, we turned our focus to reading based on the cooperating teacher's request. To collect data on the students' current status, we administered a pretest on the recognition of letters since we were working with three and four-year-olds. After interpreting the data from the pretest and samples of student work, we concluded letter recognition was an area of weakness. We then met with our teacher in the classroom to design an instructional plan that we could act upon and take an inventory of the resources at our disposal. While reflecting on our past coursework, researching best practice strategies, and also meeting with our professor, we decided to implement small group instruction using a variety of multisensory activities. We found group planning worked better for us than independent planning, and the faculty and classroom teacher support during this step was extremely beneficial. Once the planning stage was complete, we moved on to the second stage of action research.

The second stage of action research is to act. The acting stage is described as a time to reflect and contemplate on how the plan will be carried out. It is not enough to merely act on a problem without first creating a method of solving the problem. It is during this stage that the planned resolution of the identified problem is enacted. The idea of acting may seem easier than it is. Ferrell et al. (2014) suggest that the plan may take time before it is effective. This means that the action should not be rushed, but given the proper time to work.

After looking at the data, we decided to work with the students who knew many of the letters first. We began by pulling four students at a time. Emily and I considered many different activities and decided to work on a few multisensory activities. Some of the multisensory activities we utilized was having them write the letters in the sky with their finger, manipulate playdough to create a letter, and arrange pebbles to outline a letter. We hoped that using different methods would benefit the students. As a formative assessment, we had the students match letters that were written on a paper fish to a letter shark on the wall. We recorded the correct and incorrect responses and compared those results to the first pre-assessment. By doing this, we realized very quickly that the time of day that we worked with the students was important because if other students were watching a video, they would be distracted by the video. As a result, we changed the times that we would pull the students for this intervention. This reflection and ongoing review of the acting stage is one example of how the stages of action research occur concurrently.

After a plan of action is enacted, the next step is to observe the changes taking place and observing how the stakeholders respond to the action. While observing, data is gathered, and the effects of the action are observed and analyzed. Putman and Rock (2018) state that both the intended and unintended effects should be observed and analyzed. In addition, the plan of action and the action itself should be altered when necessary.

An added aspect of observing the effects of the plan is to analyze data impartially without jumping to conclusions or changing the plan immaturely (Ferrell et al., 2014). Observations and analyses should be completed objectively, meaning according to what is there and not what the researcher wants to be present. Only after the

results are properly analyzed and reflected upon can the plan be altered or the action improved upon.

After reviewing the data and adjusting the instructional time, we still found our initial plan of small group instruction was not beneficial to these children. Therefore, we began conducting one on one teaching, which was more effective for keeping each child's attention on task. We also found that we had to adjust our instruction many times during this process. One example of this was when we began working, we started with all the letters and realized this was overwhelming to the students, so going forward we decided to work on two letters per week. That adjusting of instruction seemed to have a significant impact on student achievement. This analysis of achievement occurred during the final stage of the action research process.

The fourth and final stage of action research is to reflect on what has been accomplished. Putman and Rock (2018) define this aspect of action research as the phase which analyzes recorded observations. Analyzing includes both reflecting at the end of a project as well as reflecting on observations throughout the project to determine what may need to be changed (Putnam & Rock, 2018, Roessingh & Bence, 2017). This is consistent with the original proposal by Lewin (1946) that includes reflection as a part of planning, acting, and observing, as well as its own stage because it acts as a form of formative assessment to inform the next stages of the process and plan.

During the final stage of the action research process, Emily and I reviewed the effects of the interventions to determine if improvement had occurred. We found the data provided evidence of student success for children that consistently attended the lab. We concluded that inconsistently attending school had two effects. The academic effect was that children who did not attend routinely seemed to forget what we were focusing on from one session to the next. This limited the students' ability to benefit from instruction at the same rate as students that attended frequently. Second, we concluded that there was a relational component that was influenced by attending less often. The more the students worked with us, the more comfortable they felt. This general observation occurred during instruction. The students who attended routinely seemed more willing to talk, smiled often, and appeared to trust us as teachers. This trust helped create a rapport between us as the teacher and the student.

Having reviewed the steps of action research from the perspective of Carole Ann and Emily, we now discuss the findings of this study from the point of view of the college faculty.

Collaboration

Since action research can be challenging for pre-service and novice teachers, collaboration is important (Jaipal & Figg, 2011). Teachers often collaborate with other research facilitators to develop further their own practices (Hardy, Rönnerman, & Edwards-Groves, 2017). Given that the students were just learning about action research and were utilizing it in the classroom for the first time, the college faculty, practicing teachers, and pre-service teachers routinely met. In these meetings, Carole Ann and Emily were able to identify resources that were available to them during the planning phase, clarify their understanding of the action research process, and receive guidance as they worked with the pre-K children. This collaboration was an important part of the pre-service teachers' development.

Student Teacher Reflection

To learn more about the experiences of the pre-service teachers and what they learned, the supervising faculty interviewed them using a semi-structured interview protocol aligned with the four action research steps. Three themes emerged from an analysis of the data; planning, pre-service teacher outcomes, and reflection. Planning included three categories, including background knowledge, resources, and assessment. The "pre-service teacher outcomes" included the categories; pre-service teacher learning and perception of the experience. The reflection theme included the categories of reflection in action, reflection on action, and reflection on student behaviors and challenges.

Planning

One of the primary observations of the pre-service teachers was that their background knowledge played a key component in the planning process. Both discussed their coursework, their faculty supervisor, the cooperating teachers, and professors they worked with as playing a key role in deciding the strategies they would implement for instruction.

Additionally, the resources that were available to them were an important part of the planning process. For example, Carole Ann noted, "the head of the program let us know what materials she had for the program….. we then went online to get some ideas and strategies". Emily discussed, "we built on what we learned from our methods courses…. we also reached out to our professors."

Finally, assessment played an important role in the planning process. The pre-service teachers used a pre-assessment to identify letters that the students were struggling with and developed instructional strategies for helping students learn those letters. These strategies included multisensory and engaged learning techniques. Carole Ann noted, "We worked with a lot of multisensory activities as well as trying to incorporate as many different methods as possible." For example, students used play-doh to create letters, sky-writing letters, and placing pebbles on letters.

Pre-service Teacher Outcomes

The pre-service teacher outcome theme included a discussion of their learning and their perception of the experience of conducting action research within the professional development school. While teaching at the partner school and utilizing the action research framework, the pre-service teachers noted that action research was an ongoing process. They further discussed the importance of collaboration with each other alongside experienced teachers and faculty as key components to constructing a successful plan. Additionally, they noted despite having a good plan, there was plenty of room for observing what was occurring with their instruction and adapting based on the specific context and needs of the students in real-time. Asking "why?" was identified as a critical component of this logical action research process; plan, act, observe, and reflect. Rather than following the action research process in a linear fashion where planning, acting, observing, and reflecting were occurring independently, the students noted that these steps were occurring concurrently during instruction. pre-service teachers learned that they could take an initial plan, act on it, observe during instruction, reflect on the success of the instruction, and modify the plan in real-time to achieve positive results. Carole Ann suggested, "I really like action research now that I understand it." Emily discussed, "Action research was a lot more in-depth than I had expected."

Their overall perception of the experience was positive. The pre-service teachers concluded

"Learning about this process in an authentic environment while collaborating with practicing teachers and college faculty helped promote this learning."

that being able to do the work of teachers using the action research framework provided a level of authenticity, which improved the learning experience. Emily noted, "I feel like this is what real teachers do."

Reflection

The theme of reflection included reflection in action, reflection on action, and reflection on student behaviors and challenges. Reflection in action included discussions of the thoughts the pre-service teachers had during their instruction. This reflection in action included observing the students learning and modifying instruction after assessment and also changing up instruction while teaching. While adjusting their instruction, the teachers both recognized their lack of experience as a factor that limited their ability to identify potential pitfalls in their plan. They also recognized that teaching was an ongoing process that aligned well with the action research framework.

While reflecting-on-action, the pre-service teachers discussed multisensory activities that they utilized. They stated the importance of one-on-one teaching and having early interventions within the first week of teaching based on students' ability to identify letters and sounds.

The final reflection centered on the students that they taught. They recognized that there were a variety of challenges that they needed to overcome, including the time of the day that they worked with students, the importance of student-teacher relationships, students being overwhelmed with too many letters at once, and the negative impact when instructional momentum was lost. Students quickly forgot information over time when gaps occurred between instructional days due to a variety of factors. For example, Carole Ann stated, "We realized very quickly that the time of day that we worked with students was important because a lot of the times the other students would be watching a video. So our student would be distracted by the video". The pre-service teachers also realized that working with all the letters at once was "overwhelming for the student." It was through reflecting on each day's work that led to these conclusions.

Conclusion

Action research can be a time-consuming endeavor. However, the researchers conclude that action research with pre-service teachers at a professional development school leads to a more reflective practitioner. Both Carole Ann and Emily noted that this was a cyclical process that never really concludes. Through constant reflection, their teaching is always changing, hence leading to individual growth. Learning about this process in an authentic environment while collaborating with practicing teachers and college faculty helped promote this learning.

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Carole Ann Salb (Caroleannsalb@gmail.com) has graduated from the Education program at Florida Southern College and is now a teacher in Polk County Schools.

Emily O'Brien is an undergraduate student in the Elementary Education program at Florida Southern College.

Diane LaFrance is an Assistant Professor of Education at Florida Southern College.

Jason LaFrance is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at Florida Southern College.

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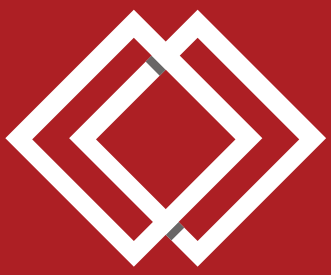

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