Introduction to the Themed Issue:
The Response and Responsibility of School-University Partnerships in a Time of Crisis

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Abstract: This article is the introduction that provides context for the Themed Issue of *School-University Partnerships* entitled The Response and Responsibility of School-University Partnerships in a Time of Crisis.

KEYWORDS:

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

Essential Three: Professional Learning and Leading: A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.

Essential Four: Reflection and Innovation: A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.

Essential Five: Research and Results. A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.

During the past year and a half, our country has been devastated by the three-part crisis of a deadly, once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, the resulting economic recession and the long-awaited spotlight on racial discrimination and oppression brought on by the horrific murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and far too many others. In the call for this themed issue of *School-University Partnerships,* titled "The Response and Responsibility of School-University Partnerships in a Time of Crisis," we asked authors to focus on the enormous responsibility we have as a community of educators and educational researchers to use this time of social upheaval as a catalyst for change.

Each article in this issue of *School-University Partnerships* addressed this call with dedication, insight, and rigor. Though they exemplify a similar commitment to the challenges of our current moment in history, the authors focused on different groups of participants and used a variety of research methods. Following a brief discussion of participants and research methods, we will explore the five themes that emerged from a review of the findings from these disparate studies.

Participants and Methods

The eleven articles presented in this themed issue focus on different groups of participants in the educational process. The articles by Hoppey et al., Butville et al., Tipton and Schmitt, Shields et al., Taira, et al., and Fisher-Ari et al. were all concerned with the preparation of teacher candidates either in undergraduate or graduate initial certification programs. In contrast, the work of Shively and colleagues documented the perspectives of a principal, a teacher and a teacher educator, while Ogletree and Bey shared information about a summer program designed to encourage high school students to consider careers as teachers, and especially as teachers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Fu et al. also reported on a summer program for high school youth. Using a different perspective, Myers showcased the "radical shifts" necessarily made by classroom teachers to provide just and equitable learning environments for all the children in their classrooms. Finally, the work of Galindo et al. looked across groups to explore the benefits of an equity-based partnership program for classroom teachers, undergraduate volunteers, and elementary school students. Thus, the articles contained in this issue represent the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders engaged in learning within school-university partnerships.

The methods and methodologies used by the authors represented a variety of perspectives and various types of qualitative research, again highlighting the breadth of research being conducted in school-university partnerships. The research of Hoppey et al., Tipton and Schmitt, and Shields et al. utilized surveys of their targeted group, and Hoppey et al. and Tipton and Schmitt also included semi-structured interviews of their participants. In a slightly different approach, Galindo et al. reported on research based on both interviews and classroom observations.

The research of Butville et al. also included the use of surveys and interviews, but was framed by a phenomenological approach, while Taira et al. conducted their research within the guidelines of an auto-ethnographic self-study. Additional approaches to qualitative research were found in the articles by Ogletree and Bey which used a case study method, and in the piece by Shively et al. which used narrative inquiry to focus on the lived experiences of participants. Finally, the research presented by Fu et al. was conducted within the tradition of youth participatory action research to center the knowledge, expertise and agency of their youth

participants, and the work of Fisher-Ari et al. was designed to foreground the voices of their participant-authors.

Themes

Despite the differences in method and in the groups targeted in the research, there were notable consistencies in the findings presented by this group of authors. Specifically, five themes emerged from a review of the articles that make up this special issue. These themes were the pivotal role of technology in the current educational context, the increased need for attention to social-emotional needs, an expanded awareness of the value of cultural competence, the direct impact of COVID-19, and the power of partnerships to support collaboration and reciprocal learning.

Technology

Technology featured prominently in the findings of the articles in this issue; for example, the work of Shields et al., Taira et al., and Ogletree and Bey indicated that the social isolation resulting from the pandemic encouraged, if not forced, participants to try out and learn new online platforms and tools. In addition, technology was significant in the findings of Hoppey et al., Shields et al., and Tipton and Schmitt who were unequivocal in their call for teacher candidates to be better prepared to use technology effectively and with ease.

Galindo et al. found that technology actually improved the communication between classroom teachers and undergraduate volunteers during the time schools were not meeting in person and pointed out that technology might be able to mitigate long-standing barriers to partnerships such as scheduling times to meet face-to-face. The work of Hoppey et al., Taira et al., Fu et al., and Tipton and Schmitt drew attention to the dramatic disparities in access to technology among students from different environments and to the consequences this had for their educational experiences and achievement.

Social-Emotional Needs

A second notable theme found in the articles was that the uncertainty and anxiety brought on by the pandemic required teachers and teacher educators to be more attentive to the social-emotional needs of their students. Tipton and Schmitt discussed the need to focus on the social-emotional needs of their teacher candidates and Ogletree and Bey reported on their attempts to support high school students who participated in their summer program as the high school students were confronted with frequent and unexpected changes.

Shields et al. noted that that the work load for students and teachers increased during the shift to online learning and thus increased stress levels. Hoppey et al., Taira et al., and Ogletree and Bey also reported on the stress-inducing changes caused by the pandemic and explained that they responded to these challenges by reducing the workload required of students and/or the amount of time that students were expected to be engaged in course work.

Finally, Hoppey et al., Taira et al., and Ogletree and Bey discussed techniques used to meet the social-emotional needs of university students and K-12 students. These techniques included an intentional focus on listening, more regular 'check-ins,' and other deliberate actions designed to foster a sense of community among groups of learners separated by space.

Cultural Competence

The third theme found among many of the articles was a focus on cultural competence and the urgent demand for educational experiences that are supportive of all children and youth, especially children and youth from groups that have historically suffered from disenfranchisement and oppression. Myers described the critical need to enact teaching practices that are based on the principles of cultural responsiveness and that are explicitly anti-racist and pro-Black. Taira et al. discussed the use of place-based techniques and an improvisational approach as culturally responsive practices. Ogletree and Bey also centered their pedagogical practices within the lived experiences of their students.

Fisher-Ari et al. reviewed the need to diversify the teaching force in order to increase the number of teachers who are representative of, and similar to, the students they teach. They suggested that by providing purposeful supports for global-majority teacher candidates it will be possible to meet the goal of diversifying the teaching force and providing more culturally sensitive and culturally responsive educational environments for students. Finally, the article by Butville et al. used a first-person account to showcase the ways in which an inquiry stance resulted in courageous teaching practices that were both culturally responsive and centered in racial justice.

The Impact of COVID-19

Most articles in this issue discussed the changes wrought by COVID-19. Articles by Tipton et al. and Hoppey et al. documented some of the most dramatic ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the experiences of teacher candidates at their institutions. Shively et al. and Galindo et al. described the ways they and their colleagues worked to maintain pre-existing programs in spite of the disruptions caused by the pandemic. Perhaps the most notable common finding among the articles in this issue was the fact that the exigencies of online teaching revealed and exacerbated the long-standing inequities in our society. Students who lived in low-income homes and neighborhoods had less access to the infrastructure of technology and were less able to stay engaged with their school work. As noted earlier in the section on technology, these profound inequities in access to technological resources were significant findings in the articles of Tipton and Schmitt, Hoppey et al., Fu et al., and Taira et al.

Partnerships and Collaboration

The fifth theme evident among every article in this issue is that of partnerships and collaboration. Myers described work done in a partnership setting that has been in existence for 30 years. Strong school-university partnerships were evident in the fact that many of the articles in this issue were written collaboratively by teams of university and school-based educators and several of the articles articulated the benefits of different types of partnerships and collaborations. For example, Shields et al. found that teacher candidates and mentor teachers supported each other during the pandemic and that teacher candidates helped their mentors learn about technology because the teacher candidates were more skilled in this area. Taira et al. reported on the collaboration between university teacher educators and K-12 teachers, and reciprocal learning is noted by both Shively et al. and Ogletree and Bey. Shively et al. shared the story of reciprocal learning that occurred as a math teacher and math teacher educator engaged in on-going conversations, and Ogletree and Bey presented evidence about reciprocal learning between faculty from the university and K-12 schools. In addition, the work of Fu et al. placed

emphasis on the collaborative relationship between university researchers, school-based educators and the young people with whom they worked.

Finally, several authors reported on the potential of partnerships to address urgent contemporary problems in education and mitigate the impact of unexpected and dramatic changes such as those that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. Galindo et al. suggested that productive school-university partnerships can help to counteract the disparities in educational opportunities that are born of entrenched income inequality. Butville et al. showed how an inquiry approach, a characteristic of many teacher preparation programs grounded in school-university partnerships, can be leveraged to interrogate current social structures and support teachers and their students in a quest for understanding and for change.

Introduction to the Articles

When looked at holistically, the eleven articles in this themed issue paint a picture of the depth and breadth of research and practice in school-university partnerships. The research presented in these articles used different methods, focused on different groups and came from a wide variety of settings including urban, rural and suburban contexts from many different regions of the United States. This variety highlighted the various ways in which partnerships can be leveraged to improve educational outcomes.

As a group, the contributing authors have facilitated the progress of the field of school-university partnerships by pointing the way towards important next steps in our research and in our practice. They have highlighted society's obligation to level the technology 'playing field,' and the education profession's obligation to pay closer attention to the social-emotional needs of students at all levels of education. The authors of the articles in "The Response and Responsibility of School-University Partnerships in a Time of Crisis" have made it clear that it is our responsibility as a community of researchers, scholars, teacher educators and practitioners to use all the tools at our disposal to create environments for students that are culturally responsive and deliberate in their intent to fight oppression, dismantle racism, and make learning a journey of exploration for all.

We begin this issue with two invited articles, "The Radicals Shift Because it Matters: Teaching for Equity and Justice in PDS Partnerships," by Michele Myers and "A Case Study of a School-University Partnership Focused on Literacy and Educational Equity: Responding to COVID-19 in the Early Grades," by Claudia L. Galindo, Susan Sonnenschein, and Mavis G. Sanders. Following these two introductory articles are three articles that focused on teacher education in traditional spaces: "Teacher Candidates' Perspectives of Infusing Innovative Pedagogical Methods and Trauma-Informed Practices into a Teacher Education Program During the COVID-19 Pandemic," by David Hoppey, Karly Mills, Debbie Reed, and Chris Collinsworth; "An Investigation of Mentor Teachers' and Student Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Co-Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic," by Mariha Shields, Sue Rieg, and Sara Rutledge; and "Preparing Preservice Teachers in the Midst of a Pandemic," by Sara Tipton and Vicki Schmitt.

The next two articles also centered the preparation of future teachers, but in programs that were somewhat less traditional and geared towards teacher candidates who were already working as teachers and/or who represented groups typically under-represented in the teaching profession. These articles are: "Dismantling Barriers to the Demographic Imperative: Illuminating and Addressing Hurdles Experienced by Global-Majority Teacher Residents in School-University Partnerships," by Teresa Fisher-Ari, Anne E. Martin, DaShaunda Patterson,

Haimanot Getahun Haile, Elizabeth Tennies, and Huan Ngo; and "Intentional Improvising: An Extreme Pacific Region School-University Self-Study in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis," by Brooke Ward Taira, Keith Cross, Summer Maunakea, Ivy Yeung, and Deborah Zuercher.

The next four articles each targeted a different set of participants in the educational process. The article by Danielle Butville, Sarah Hanrahan, and Rachel Wolkenhauer titled, "Prepared to Take Responsibility: Practitioner Inquiry for Social Justice in a Professional Development School Partnership," shared the perspective of novice and experienced teachers and teacher educators. In the article titled, "Academy for Future Teachers: Transitioning to Virtual Delivery," Susan L. Ogletree and Yasmine Bey reported on their summer program with high school students. In the next article, "'Figure it out: Stories about a PDS Partnership that Put the Needs of Students First," Christopher Shively, Elizabeth Malinowski, and Jill Clark shared their experiences as educators during the pandemic. The final article, "Critical Creative Out of the Box Thinking in COVID Times," by Shuang Fu, Ruth Harman, and Maverick Y. Zhang closes our themed issue with a description of a summer program for youth and an explicit focus on democratic, anti-racist and liberatory educational practices.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as editors for this themed issue of *School-University Partnerships.* The process has been immensely rewarding and we have learned a great deal from each group of authors. We anticipate that readers will be similarly rewarded with new understanding, a broader perspective on the current status of work being done in and about school-university partnerships, and a renewed commitment to "advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners" (NAPDS, 9 Essentials, 2021).

Reference

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