

Re-envisioning Antiracism within NAPDS Nine Essentials: A virtual reading group project

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Abstract: COVID-19 continues to affect academia across the country. For Rowan University, fall 2020 prompted many initiatives and activities to pause due to financial challenges. In addition, faculty were asked to teach increased course loads, which impacted Professors-in-Resident (PIRs), and some faculty who receive course releases to conduct PDS work in an assigned P-12 school. As a result, PDS work at Rowan University was suspended for the 2020-2021 academic year. To sustain PDS momentum, a yearlong virtual reading group was implemented. Participants met virtually to discuss selected readings with a focus on topics that supported the school's PDS goals. For three participants, a decision was made to focus their reading on a specific text with one goal being to revisit how the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) Nine Essentials were integrated into the university-school partnerships. Specifically, what essentials address the partners' antiracism, social justice and equity work?

KEYWORDS: Anti-Racism, Social Justice, Equity, NAPDS Essentials

NAPDS NINE ESSENTIALS ADDRESSED:

Essential 1: A Comprehensive Mission: A PDS is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.

Essential 5: A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets

Essential 6: A PDS requires intentionally evolving written articulated agreement(s) that delineate the commitments, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of all involved

Essential 7: A PDS is built upon shared, sustainable governance structures that promote collaboration, foster reflection, and honor and value all participants' voices.

Introduction

COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact on how colleges of education, across the nation, have been able to conduct work in schools. For Rowan University's college of education, the pandemic resulted in the Professional Development Schools (PDS) network of eleven P-12 school-partnerships to pause due to the university's financial challenges. Faculty course teaching loads were increased to compensate for the decrease in student enrollment. This impacted Professors-in-Resident (PIRs), the faculty who receive course release to conduct PDS work in an assigned P-12 school. As a result, the PDS work was suspended for a year.

Despite the university putting PDS initiatives and the activities associated with this work on hold, to sustain PDS work, a yearlong virtual reading group was implemented. The idea for the reading group was the result of one author's participation in a similar group sponsored by a PDS Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association in the summer of 2020. Mirroring the summer reading group, a yearlong reading group was created. Participants met virtually to discuss selected readings, which focused on topics that support the university-school partnership's PDS goals and objectives. Invitations for membership to the reading groups were opened to all eleven P-12 school partners in the university's PDS network (referred to as Reading Cohorts). For each of the eleven Reading Cohorts, educators from varying professional backgrounds (e.g., PIRs/university faculty, school PDS liaison, administrators, professional staff, clinical interns) gathered virtually once a month throughout the academic year. Members read and answered specific questions related to select articles and/or book chapters. Prior to the monthly meetings, an initial meeting was held to provide an overview of the project and to model how a meeting might be facilitated. After this overview, the facilitation of the meeting sessions rotated, giving each member in the individual Reading Cohorts an opportunity to choose the readings that support the partnership's PDS work. The facilitation of each meeting tasked members to prepare, in advance, purposeful discussion questions to facilitate the meeting conversations. At mid-year and at the conclusion of the yearlong project, all Reading Cohorts virtually came together and shared the learning and experiences discussed in their reading groups.

For three participants, their Reading Cohort focused on reading a specific text with one of the goals being to revisit how the NAPDS Nine Essentials were integrated into the 11 university-school partnerships. Specifically, what essentials address the partners' anti-racism, social justice and equity work?

Context

Rowan University is a public research university in the northeastern United States. The university is a predominately white institution, especially in the teacher preparation programs. As part of Rowan University's commitment to building community partnerships, the college of education established its first PDS partnership in 1991. Historically, the majority of the PDSs partnered with Rowan University mirrored the demographics of the university in both student population, P-12 teachers and administration. Of the eleven schools in Rowan University's PDS network, three are led by principals of color and four have assigned PIRs of color. What lacks in diversity at the administrator, and P-12 and university faculty level, is made up for in the diversity of P-12 learners. That is, seven of the 11 schools have a students of color

population of 50% or more. The diversity of the P-12 learners is what drove the need to investigate the structural role of anti-racism, social justice and equity within Rowan University's PDS network.

The Reading Cohort discussed in this article consists of one university administrator and two university faculty members. Author A (she, her, hers) is the Executive Director of the Office of Educator Support and Partnerships, an office that provides support to programs and initiatives related to education preparation as well as P-12 partnerships. Author A identifies as an African American woman. She recognized the lack of diversity in the PDS network for several years and began to use her position as an administrator to ensure the PDS structure aligned with the college's vision of being a leader in the preparation of reflective practitioners who learn to use education to help transform a diverse society (Rowan, 2021a).

Author B (she, her, hers) is a new tenure-track Assistant Professor of Equity in Teacher Education, who has not yet been assigned a PDS due to COVID-19 temporary suspension of the program. Author B identifies as a white, Jewish woman committed to using her privilege to address issues of social justice and equity in her teaching and scholarship. Author C (he, him, his) is a full-time lecturer who recently completed his first year as a PIR during the 2019-2020 school year. Author C identifies as a white male who, prior to joining Rowan University as a full-time lecturer, spent eight years in public education serving predominantly students of color. Since assuming the role of a PIR, he is continually making efforts to engage white teachers, serving predominantly students of color, in tough conversations centered on anti-racism, inclusion, and diversity. Being that the group had two novice PIRs, it was decided to focus the Reading Cohort around a text that Author A had purchased and was planning to use to conduct a book study with the current PIRs in Rowan University's PDS network. The latter did not take place due to the pandemic.

The text *Clinically Based Teacher Education in Action*, edited by Eva Gavin and Rebecca West Burns (2020) contains case studies about various PDS-related issues including the Nine Essentials of a PDS as well as a chapter on equity and social justice in the PDS model. This article grew out of an earlier group meeting where the discussion focused on *Chapter 11: Committing to Equity and Social Justice*. The discussion began with the exploration of various definitions of the term social justice. Looking across the literature at various social justice definitions, the group began to think about how PIRs and the network, not only define social justice, but embed it throughout the network's PDS activities. The group began to examine, holistically, the PDS work in the network's communities, which resulted in asking more questions including: How does our PDS work enable our preservice and in-service teachers to be advocates for equity and justice for all students? How do we ensure that our PIRs are committed to issues of equity that are aligned with the university and college mission? How do we respond when the schools or school districts we work with are reluctant, or even resistant, to the role the PDS relationship will play in helping make schools more inclusive? How do the structures, policies and documentation promote or inhibit a commitment to equity and social justice? The discussion and proposed questions led to the authors' decision to explore the question *How can the use of a virtual reading group lead to changes in the ways in which a PDS model can be structurally re-envisioned with a commitment to anti-racism, social justice and equity?*

In this article, the authors provide a literature synthesis about PDS partnerships and the role that anti-racism, social justice, and equity plays in P-12 schools. Next, the structural components and NAPDS essentials that guide the network's PDS work as well as how the components were found to need revision are described. The latter includes answering the following questions for each component: Where are we? Why are we here? and Where do we want to be? The article ends with final thoughts that include how changes to the network's structural components will be implemented in the future to address and answer questions about PDS work.

Literature Synthesis

PDS Partnerships

PDSs are innovative institutions formed through partnerships between professional education programs and P-12 schools. The goals of PDSs are four-fold: (a) to maximize student achievement and well-being, (b) to assist in the preparation of teachers and other school-based educators, (c) to provide professional development of teachers and other school-based educators, and (d) to apply inquiry designed to improve and support student and educator development (Abdal-Haqq, 1998; NCATE, 2001). In a PDS model, the school provides a site for preservice teachers to learn about teaching and learning and apply the knowledge they gained in the university context. Additionally, university faculty are expected to become immersed in the school, instructing their coursework within the school and providing professional development for teachers and school staff based on the mutually agreed upon school improvement goals. An effective PDS is based on true partnership built on a mutually beneficial collaboration in which the school staff members and the university take on responsibility in meeting the educational needs of children in P-12 settings and the need to prepare teacher candidates (Ball & Rundquist, 1993; Cozza, 2010; Grisham et al, 2002; Lieberman, 1995; Taymans et al, 2012; Trachtman, 2007). This model of collaboration creates environments in which university students, faculty liaisons, classroom teachers, and P-12 students in the schools can engage in long-term, ongoing research-based initiatives that benefit all members in the learning community (Rowan, 2021b). As Decker et al. (2018) describes, PDS involves cyclical relations.

The development of strong, vibrant, mutually beneficial PK-20 partnerships serve to promote shared responsibility for the preparation of teachers, provide a context to empower and better serve complex learning environments for both candidates and PK-12 students, and ensure professional accountability for candidate effectiveness. These, in turn, empower teachers to meet the diverse needs of children in our schools. It truly does take all key stakeholders in a clinical partnership to prepare educators to enter the 21st-century classroom. (Decker et al, 2018, p. 44).

PDSs create a space for the P-12 school and the university that is mutually owned to address problems and issues facing each partner (Burns & Badiali, 2020). These partnerships between school and university stakeholders require a balance of the independence of each partner with the interdependence of the partners on each other (Sumowski & Peters, 2019). Like living breathing organisms, PDS partnerships grow, change and adapt over time based on the wants and needs of

each member of the relations. Dresden (2006) captures this sentiment, “I would suggest that a PDS is not a thing; rather, it is a set of relationships. A PDS is not a product; instead, it is a process” (p. 75).

Anti-Racism, Social Justice and Equity in P-12 Education

As PDS programs create spaces for P-12 schools and universities to address problems and issues, PDS programs can also help create spaces to address anti-racism, social justice and equity in P-12 education. The diversity in American public schools continues to increase (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2020), yet the teaching population continues to remain mostly white and middle class, approximately 83% (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2016). In addition, individual and systemic racism, sexism and other types of oppression are pervasive in classrooms, school cultures, and communities. Due to these demographical mismatches between teachers and their students, compounded with the unrelenting oppression that exists in school spaces, for over thirty years scholars have argued that multicultural education, culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogies, and social justice be integrated across the curriculum and applied in the school contexts in an attempt to make schools more equitable spaces for all children (Banks, 1991, 2004, 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto & Bode, 2008).

The goal of multicultural education is to help reform schools so that all students, regardless of gender, cultural group, race, or social class can experience equality in schools and have the opportunity to experience educational mobility (Banks, 2004). This educational movement pushes educators to “[challenge and reject] racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society, and accepts and [affirm] the pluralisms (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities and teachers reflect” (Nieto & Bode, 2008, p. 44). When done well, multicultural education can make school spaces more equitable for all children. A review of the multicultural movement led to the development of affirming pedagogies for African American youth such as culturally relevant pedagogy.

Culturally relevant pedagogy is the study of oppression with the goal of collective empowerment (Ladson-Billings, 1995), but especially the empowerment of African American youth. Culturally relevant pedagogies are based on: academic success for all children, with a focus on children of color; the development and maintenance of cultural competence; and the development of a critical consciousness in children so that they can go out into the world and challenge individual and systematic oppression. This anti-racist approach to teaching benefits all children, as it helps empower students to see the oppression that exists in the world, especially for Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) and the work against it. For this article the authors use a definition of social justice, presented by Garin and Burns (2020), citing Cochran-Smith (2004), as “recognizing and addressing the disparities and inequalities among racial, cultural, and linguistic groups in school achievement, poverty levels and resources” (p. 247). They argue that with this definition, an important element is that of “addressing” these disparities and inequalities in education.

Equity & Justice in PDS Partnerships:

When courses and field experiences are carefully and collaboratively designed with the school and university partners, preservice teacher education can have a significant influence on the beliefs and pedagogies of novice teachers (Cantor, 2002). Just as the school-based clinical experiences should help preservice teachers learn about how to teach reading, classroom management techniques, etc., school-based clinical experiences can help preservice teachers with their understanding of anti-racism, social justice, and equity. Embedded coursework and field experiences in PDSs that are enacting culturally relevant, culturally sustaining and equity-based pedagogies can help preservice teachers breach the disconnect between the theory and praxis (Middleton, 2003). PDS experience in schools, with partnerships focused on commitments to anti-racism, social justice, and equity, can help preservice teachers understand their own biases, break down previously held deficit-based ways of thinking, understand the needs of the students in their classrooms, and find ways to design learning experiences to best meet the needs of students in their classroom (Fall, 2018; Peters et al, 2018).

At the same time, while working with the university partner, school-based teachers and staff can also develop their ideologies and pedagogies around these critical topics. Partnerships between schools and universities can provide opportunities to help cultivate teachers' dispositions around many topics, but also around topics of anti-racism, social justice, and equity that can benefit students, teacher educators, mentor teachers, and emerging teachers (AACTE, 2018). In order for PDS partnerships to change ideas and dispositions around equity and justice, "both the school community and university must be cognizant and in accord about the level of commitment and dedication necessary to tackle issues born from long-standing hegemonic practices supported by biased systemic processes and policies" (Fall, 2018, p. 8). The reading group was one way to begin addressing hegemonic, biased and racist practices.

Revising Structural Components of a PDS Network

Over the course of the Reading Cohort discussions, we, the authors, recognized that several structural components in the network were in need of revisions. Revisions focused on a specific NAPDS essential. In this section, we first identify the *essential*. Next, we describe how the *essential* is currently addressed. Then, we elaborate on why the *essential* is addressed in this way. We conclude with a description of where we would like to see the *essential* addressed if the network is committed to an anti-racism, social justice and equity stance in the PDS work.

NAPDS Essential 1: A Comprehensive Mission

Rowan University PDS network's mission aligns with the vision of the university's college of education, which is to be "a leading force in preparing and supporting reflective practitioners who use education to transform our global society" (Rowan, 2021c). The college of education's tagline is "access, success and equity, turning research into practice" (Rowan, 2021d). To ensure this commitment is attained, the work conducted with PDS partners is collaborative in nature to promote learning and the mental and physical well-being of diverse learners in all settings.

The mission of the network also hinges on goals to: raise student achievement, professionally prepare teacher candidates, facilitate P-12 faculty development, and foster inquiry directed at the improvement of practice and enhance student learning. Per the vision statement, the college of

education at Rowan University prepares and supports professionals both preservice and in-service, while fostering a commitment to social justice through the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Although Rowan University's college of education and PDS network's missions speak to diversity, social justice and equity, the authors questioned where those ideas live in the action of the PDS work? Each university-school partnership in the network is required to write a PDS School Report, which is written by the PIR, P-12 site coordinator and the school's PDS Steering Committee. These reports provide an assessment process to support the continued development of the partnership. These collaboratively written reports, completed at the beginning and end of the year, are intended to provide a thorough plan and platform through which to analyze the efficacy of the partnership. The initial report requires a copy or description of the school's improvement plan, an explanation of baseline data to support the work identified, and a list of PDS goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are supported through a series of narratives describing the plan and focus of the Rowan University's clinical interns assigned to the site, a list of the course(s) taught at the site, and a description of the expected outcomes. The report ends with a tabled timeline of the activities to be implemented throughout the year.

At the end of the year, the PIR submits a final PDS School Report. Also, collaborative in nature, this report provides evidence that supports the PDS work for the year. The report summarizes how the PDS goals and objectives were achieved, provides an explanation of the impact on teacher professional development, the clinical interns' plan and focus, and the course(s) taught on site. The report concludes with explanations of the research the PIR conducted, and student achievements as a result of professional development and research implemented throughout the academic year. Both reports are submitted to the Executive Director who reviews and meets with PIRs when clarification is needed before the reports are shared with the districts' superintendents. This reciprocal process allows for all involved to be aware of the PDS work and provide opportunities for modifications if needed.

When reviewing the 11 PDS's 2019-2020 reports, four reports explicitly addressed anti-racism, social justice, and/or equity in the report's objectives, goals, and/or activity descriptions. Diversity was in the form of inclusive education, social emotional learning, trans lingual learning and implementing diverse children's literature across the school curriculum. However, seven reports did not address areas of anti-racism, social justice, and/or equity, which does not mean that the PDS work did not address these areas, but it was not explicitly described. This led the authors to ask, if anti-racism, social justice and equity are identified as a mission of this work, why wouldn't all reports identify these ideas in the PDS goals and objectives?

As a result of discovering that anti-racism, social justice, and equity were not explicitly addressed in at least one of the goals and objectives of ALL PDS reports, it was determined that there was an opportunity to make this more explicit moving forward. Providing guiding questions to place these areas at the center of developing, implementing, and reporting on the PDS work is one example of a revision that will take place moving forward. For example, Rowan University's clinical interns are evaluated in their yearlong clinical practice experiences using the Charlotte Danielson Framework. The framework identifies four domains of teaching

responsibilities: (1) Planning and Preparation, (2) Classroom Environment, (3) Instruction, and (4) Professional Responsibilities (Danielson, 2007). Within each of these domains, opportunities to address anti-racism, social justice, and equity are identified. Using this framework, guiding questions can be used to ensure PDS reports address these important areas for clinical interns and inservice teachers mentoring them. Table 1 provides examples of the domain, components and guiding questions to implement in future work.

Table 1. *Embedding the Charlotte Danielson Framework in PDS Reports*

Danielson Domain	Domain's Component	Guiding Questions
1. Planning & Preparation	1A. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	How will the educator be prepared to incorporate global awareness and cultural diversity within his/her teaching?
2. Classroom Environment	2B. Establishing a Culture for Learning	What data will be collected to ensure that the educator has established a culture for learning?
3. Instruction	3C. Engaging Students in Learning	What evidence indicates that the educator is aware of the students' learning style?
4. Professional Responsibilities	4C. Communicating with Families	How will the educator prepare to be culturally sensitive when engaging and interacting with students' families?

NAPDS Essential 5: University-School's Engagement and Public Sharing

All new and returning PIRs participate in an orientation prior to the start of each academic year. These interactive orientations allow new PIRs to work with existing PIRs to develop school agendas that align with the four cornerstones (i.e., preservice, inservice, research, student achievement) of PDS work. Information and instructions about the PDS School Reports, PIR evaluations, and calendar of events are presented at this all-day meeting. In addition, representatives from all PDS partners formally come together four times during an academic year to attend network meetings. These meetings create space for PDS partners to share the work that encompasses the four cornerstones of PDS. The meetings offer a forum to celebrate and provide updates on the work being implemented at each PDS site. The meetings are structured to facilitate collaboration, reflection, and communication. At the end of each year, PIRs and school partners come together for a year-end retreat. Similar to the beginning of the year orientation, the day-long meeting is an opportunity to provide updates about how goals and objectives were accomplished and make plans for the following year. The retreat is also an opportunity to recognize and reward the network members for their contributions to the work.

It became very clear that these various forums had opportunities to engage and share on a deeper level. The current opportunities were being used to provide structure and formalities to complete

the work, but PIRs and school partners were not being held accountable for how their work addressed the mission of anti-racism, social justice, and equity. The authors quickly recognized that these multiple meetings could be a platform to acknowledge those who were engrossed in this work and assist those who were not. It was determined that future beginning of the year orientations, mid-year partnership meetings and end-of-the-year retreats would include structured activities and discussions around anti-racism, social justice, and equity in relation to the work being conducted at ALL PDSs. For example, the next orientation will begin with an introduction of a new charge; a common understanding of Rowan University's commitment to anti-racism, social justice, and equity. Similar to the Reading Cohort meetings, a common text will be used to define and articulate what PDS work that has an anti-racism, social justice, and equity stance looks like and how to implement it into P-12 schools. In addition, PIRs will brainstorm together (i.e., professional readings, professional development workshop ideas, meeting working sessions) ways to help prepare PIRs not addressing the areas and the school partners to have a common language towards this work.

By making the connections to anti-racism, social justice and equity explicit for PIRs and giving them a place to discuss, the goal is two-fold. First, the authors hope to empower the PIRs to become advocates for BIPOC in the schools and communities in which they work. These discussions will provide language for PIRs to assist their schools in becoming more culturally relevant and anti-racist. Secondly, given that the PIRs are coming to the discussion with very different backgrounds and commitments to anti-racism, these forums can provide examples of implemented "tried and true" practices that can be modified and adapted to other PDS settings.

NAPDS Essential 6: University-School's Articulation Agreement

The network's articulation agreement is in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The process for signing the MOU begins with a meeting between the Executive Director and district administrators. For current PDSs in the network, the previous year's MOU is reviewed and if necessary, changes are made to ensure school needs are met. The MOUs provide a description of core PDS activities, a list of activities that the school/district agrees to conduct, a list of activities that the university agrees to conduct and the expectations of participating school members. This document is signed by the district's superintendent and business administrator as well as the Rowan University's dean of the college of education.

When revisiting the MOU it was abundantly clear that there was no mention of PIRs, district/school or the college of education responsibilities to implement the mission of anti-racism, social justice, and equity. Without it and without a discussion around it, many schools in the network were not being held accountable for this important work. In fact, because the MOU is seen as a contract between the school/district and university, there were a number of opportunities to add items to ensure that anti-racism, social justice, and equity are addressed moving forward.

The MOU will be revised to include a section where all parties pledge to support work that is grounded in anti-racism, social justice and equity for all. In this section a definition, that will be collaboratively crafted by the partnership, will begin this added section followed by how this definition should guide the four cornerstones of PDS work. The Executive Director will hold

meetings with school administrators to introduce them to the cultural shift the network is taking and give each partnership an opportunity to pledge their support to this shift or reevaluate their participation.

NAPDS Essential 7: University-School's Forums for Ongoing Governance, Reflection and Collaboration *Ongoing Governance*

The network offers a structure that provides governance, reflection and collaboration through a series of formal PIR meetings and dissemination opportunities. The PIRs meet monthly to discuss and collaborate around PDS related initiatives, questions, challenges, and events. These meetings provide a space for PIRs to offer support, share experiences across PDSs and work together to plan around conference presentations, research efforts, and collaborate on local and national efforts to sustain and expand the PDS network. On a rotating basis throughout the academic year, PIRs highlight progress of their PDS work, upcoming initiatives and celebrate accomplishments through a weekly blog received by all faculty, staff, and students in the college of education.

The current pandemic continues to ravage education at all levels. To compound the current pandemic, social tensions continue to rise across the nation. The pandemic has paused PDS work at Rowan University, but collaborative efforts to continue PDS work by way of virtual reading groups arose. The authors took this time of pause to reflect on the current ideologies and practices of Rowan University's PDS network and the respective PIRs. The authors reviewed the pertinent Nine NAPDS Essentials and Rowan University's college of education's tagline and discovered there was work to be done if the network was truly in alignment with an anti-racism, social justice and equity stance. The tagline explicitly reads, "Access, success and equity, turning research into practice" (Rowan, 2021e) but these efforts of turning research of access, success, and equity into practice are minimal, if not absent when PDS/PIR work was highlighted at quarterly PDS network meetings.

During the quarterly monthly PDS network meetings, PIRs and partnering school faculty and staff in attendance have the opportunity to highlight and keep the network abreast of the PDS work currently taking place at their respective sites. PDS work is always aligned to the four cornerstones of PDS (i.e., preservice, inservice, research, student achievement) but given the wide range of professional backgrounds, experiences, and research focus, PDS work was transforming into an isolated experience with no interconnected dependence. As a result, the authors asked themselves, how can we transform our PDS work into a collection of interdependent projects addressing a mission of anti-racism, social justice, equity, and diversity?

PDS is the pathway for the network to address a mission of achieving anti-racism, social justice and equity. That is, it requires equipping the PIRs with the research and theory in order for them to turn-key to P-12 faculty and staff as well as preservice educators currently interning at their respective PDSs. In past PIR meetings, these forums were primarily informational and an opportunity to highlight the current PDS work taking place, but with such diverse professional experiences, disciplines, and research backgrounds in the room at one time, it is an optimal time

to redesign these meetings to discuss research, articulate reflections, and move to strategies that align to an anti-racism, social justice, and equity stance.

PIR meetings and PDS network meetings will move to the construction of a shared commitment and responsibility to bring anti-racism, social justice and equity to the forefront of PDS work as it becomes an overarching charge that begs the question, how can the PDS network incorporate anti-racism, social justice and equity into achieving the four cornerstones of PDS? Meetings will proceed to highlight current work. Then collaborative working sessions of reflection around current projects and strategizing future projects. Each PIR will become a sounding board and collaborator for fellow PIRs. This structure is summarized in Diagram 1. *Diagram 1. Ant-Racism, Social Justice, and Equity as the Charge for PDS.*

Reflection and Collaboration-School Reports & PIR Evaluation

PIRs are evaluated twice a year using an evaluation form that is completed by members of the PDS Steering Committee. The evaluators are asked to use the following performance ratings: exceeding, meeting, developing, or not meeting expectations. Evaluators are also asked to provide thorough comments to support the ratings given in order to determine whether the PIR should continue working in the assigned PDS. In the event that the PIRs are experiencing challenges, the Executive Director will meet with them to develop and institute a developmental plan. At the end of the year, the PIRs are reevaluated to ensure a good fit. For those PIRs with developmental plans, it is a time to confirm that the concerns have been adequately addressed, and if not, the PIRs are released from their duties.

PIRs are evaluated using an evaluation form that does not evaluate the PIR's work in the areas of anti-racism, social justice, and equity. Social tensions have been on the rise as more and more evidence of social injustice and social inequities are brought to the forefront through news outlets, social media platforms, and peer to peer discourse. While a select few PIRs have been successful with such projects, it is critical that all PIRs are equipped to drive projects of anti-racism, social justice, and equity with Rowan University's P-12 partners and future educators currently enrolled as Rowan University students and interns in PDSs. The PDS network is Rowan University's pathway to educate and support matters of anti-racism, social justice, and equity.

The work of where we want to be has already begun. As the authors continue to move forward during this time of PDS pause, they have the opportunity to begin cultivating a shared responsibility and commitment to addressing the mission of anti-racism, social justice, and equity. It is an opportunity to meet the network's mission and hold all accountable for this work by adding language that requires partners to evaluate PIRs to make them accountable for implementing an anti-racism, social justice, and equity stance in their work. However, this is just the beginning. Rowan University and the college of education have an opportunity to address the mission firsthand. As social tension continues to rise, it is important to continue to provide professional development to the university faculty and staff, to the network's partners, but more importantly, it is the responsibility of the PDS network to provide future educators best practices for confronting social inequities.

Discussion

In this article, we discussed the ways in which our participation in a virtual reading group led us to question and examine the ways in which we formally enact an anti-racism, social justice, and equity stance into PDS structures. We have noted that although we are truly committed to anti-racism, social justice, and equity, the Reading Cohort brought to light needed changes to the way things have been done to put equity front and center. Below, we conclude with a description of each *essential* and the modifications needed to be made to the network to ensure a stronger commitment to an anti-racism, social justice, and equity stance is embedded in the PDS work.

Essential 1: *A PDS is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.*

We are excited about the energy this project has provided to continue to move the college and the PDS network's mission forward and the opportunity to bring anti-racism, social justice, and equity to the forefront of the college's PDS work. Yet, at the same time, we recognize the need for a more consistent review of commitments in the form of action. One practical change is to have the annual reports collaboratively written by the PIRs and school PDS partners. We want to ensure that this report explicitly addresses the ways in which the PDS partnership has addressed equity over the school year. Making this a mandatory part of the annual reports, will help PIRs and PDSs to remain focused on this important element of education.

Essential 5: *A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets*

PIRs meet a minimum of five times a year. In these meetings plans are being made to include explicit training and discussions around anti-racism, social justice, and equity in relation to the work being conducted in the network's PDSs. Opportunities will be used to push PIRs' commitment to social justice and provide them strategies on how to continue this work in their PDSs.

Essential 6: *A PDS requires intentionally evolving written articulated agreement(s) that delineate the commitments, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of all involved*

In reviewing the network's MOU, we found that the document had no explicit language on anti-racism, social justice, and equity. We realize that this is an area that needs significant revisions, which will begin with collaborative conversations between the PIRs and school partners. If the network is truly committed to justice and wants preservice teachers to have field placements and embedded coursework that focuses on equity and justice, PDS partners must be equally committed to this work.

Essential 7: *A PDS is built upon shared, sustainable governance structures that promote collaboration, foster reflection, and honor and value all participants' voices.*

There was a blatant absence of consistency within the PDS network that addressed the mission of anti-racism, social justice, and equity within the projects/work taking place within the P-12 school. If the network is taking on this new charge, PIRs need to be prepared with the consistent structures that will allow them to work with their partner school so reflection and collaboration can take place. Spaces to collaborate with PDS partners as they too engage in anti-racism, social justice, and equity-based work also needs to be provided.

Ultimately, the goals remain the same. Through commitments to anti-racism, social justice, and equity, the authors hope to re-envision the way practicing teachers engage in this work, prepare preservice teachers to do this work as novice teachers, and ultimately, to make schools more equitable spaces for all youth, regardless of their backgrounds.

Concluding Thoughts

We are three individuals in a larger PDS structure who are committed to making significant changes to our PDS network. We acknowledge the need to bring in other voices to the conversation including schoolteachers and staff, school administrators, students (where appropriate) and other colleagues committed to this work, especially those who identify as BIPOC and can act in the role of a critical friend. The goal of this work is to impact the schools and the lives of all learners, but particularly school communities and learners of color. However, change in schools requires education and professional development. A PDS network that takes a stance on anti-racism, social justice, and equity can provide a structure for change. We acknowledge that change will not happen immediately, but will require time, commitment and a willingness to engage in a dialogue for change.

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