
Doing PDS: Stories and Strategies from Successful Clinically Rich Practice

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Doing PDS: Stories and Strategies from Successful Clinically Rich Practice

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Finally, we thank our school and community partners. The partners highlighted throughout the book are:

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SERIES FOREWORD

JoAnne Ferrara and Janice L. Nath

It seems in education as if we often are in a state of not knowing how to “fix our schools”—though not for lack of desire but for not knowing what works. However, there has been one model that has provided a beacon for full-school transformation for quite a number of years now—the Professional Development School (PDS) model. This model provides growth for *all* stakeholders in the schools, including the school’s students, teachers, and administrators and the university partners and preservice teachers—all learning from each other in clinical settings. Since 2002, the series subtitled *A Volume in Research in Professional Development Schools* by Information Age Publications has sought to share studies which unveil the numerous facets of work done in this type of environment. Some of the research has been qualitative and some quantitative, but the overall picture of these school/university partnerships is one that demonstrates that when everyone works towards the same goal of student learning, we can fix much of what is problematic in our schools.

Doing PDS is a unique addition to this series in that SUNY Buffalo State can speak to a long history of work in PDS partnerships over the past 20 years. In addition, the chapters range in content, most often in case study formats, from perspectives of many members of their teams throughout the decades of their collaboration with community schools. This volume fulfills the purpose of sharing with the education community the uncommon ways educators have envisioned

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and reported solutions for the difficult work of change. We invite not only the educational community to take note of these problems and solution gained, but those outside education who are also seeking what does work in schooling.

For these reasons, we are extremely happy to welcome the editors and authors of *How to Do PDS: Stories and Strategies from Successful Clinically Rich Practice Moving into New Spaces to Respond to Current Educational Challenges* to a new *Volume in Research in Professional Development Schools*.

Janice & JoAnne

FOREWORD

Wendy A. Paterson

Schools aren't as good as they used to be. Then again, they never were.

You will see this quote attributed to humorist Will Rogers who actually drawled, “The schools ain’t what they used to be and never was.” Seems to be a good summary of the many schemes of school and teacher improvement enacted by well-intentioned reformers in the history of public schooling in the United States. Indeed, in the history of U.S. public schools there has been as many school reform efforts as clever ways to repackage the age-old problems of pervasive inequities in our society. In her book *Democratic Education*, Amy Gutmann sums up the chaos of voices touting educational reform thus, “Conventional political approaches often give us the wrong guidance” (1999, p. 8). Given that trends in teacher education are intimately connected with political, economic, and philosophical forces holding sway at various periods of our history from the earliest colonial dame schools to the current fashion of technologically enhanced “new schools,” can we dare to espouse any one model for preparing teachers that transcends time, politics, and fashion?

Before we suggest that our model is superior to any other, there are some truths we can accept in preparing teachers that I have found to stand the test of time and place:

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pages xiii–xxi.

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- An essential of good teaching is that learners learn.
- We teach children and young people, not classes.
- The skilled teacher must accept a mandate to be forever changing and adapting.
- Successful teacher preparation requires *education*, not merely training.
- The best laboratory for teacher preparation is the P-12 classroom.
- Education is a process not a product.
- Results matter. The simple test of one's teaching is to determine if a technique, lesson or situation helps learners learn. If it does, do more of it! If not, stop doing it.
- Good teachers can be products of good programs. Great teachers are born from the interaction of person, practice, and place.
- Teaching is not a solo act. Collaboration, teamwork, cooperation, coaching, and mentoring are components of excellence in practice.
- Schools do not exist outside of the social forces that surround them, pervade them, and influence them. Learning is a social act. So is teaching.

With these observations in mind, this book is compiled from the experiences of seasoned teacher education professionals who were instrumental in defining how to incorporate these 10 enduring truths into clinically rich educator preparation through Professional Development School (PDS) programs. In relating their own experiences, they offer pathways of practice that will help any program develop professionals whose commitment to advancing learning for all children and youth is forged in the crucible of the P-12 classroom.

In recent years the standardization of public schooling has been echoed in standardization for teacher education. While patterned frameworks and measurable standards help us to develop similar programs that yield similar results across a diversity of colleges and regions, they deliberately avoid any focus on forces that help the individual grow into his or her role from neophyte to professional. The very nature of standards-based practice is to *minimize* variation among large populations, not to embrace individual differences. Proponents of standardization believe that minimizing variance in practice promotes equity of results while “controlling” the effects of diversity, distinctiveness, and individuality.

By contrast, the Professional Development School model first suggested by the Holmes partnerships in the early 1990s, suggests that by educating teachers in authentic settings (real schools) and partnering colleges of teacher education with a full range of education professionals, teacher candidates will learn the competencies of teaching best by observing master teachers; participating in real classroom situations; reflecting on their own many enactments of teaching strategies learned; and interacting with parents, community agencies, and other school-related groups that are typical “players” in all forms of schooling. In other words, it is through what is now fashionably called “clinical practice” that teachers learn the *craft* of teaching while developing their own artistry of practice that will be to-

tally unique to each teacher. This book clearly presents that lessons learned from 20 years of development for Buffalo State's Professional Development School consortium. With college-level faculty guiding their teacher candidates to "grow into" their practice by exposing them to real children in real classrooms whose real teachers both thrive and fail every day in a diversity of settings, the "teacher-craftsman" and "teacher-artist" emerges.

In addition to its demonstrable impact on the growth and nurturing of teacher candidates, the consortial nature of the PDS as a group benefits the college and its school partners in ways that could never be felt by either without the other. PDS collaboration continually suggests new directions, offers innovation, encourages creativity, supports and impels the partners to do impactful research, and moves the entire profession of teaching to transcend school building and district borders. Silos are broken. Competition is for the benefit of all. Collaboration and coaching are essentials rather than add-ons.

In Chapter 1, PDS co-director Leslie K. Day reviews the development of the Buffalo State PDS program from its infancy with fewer than five schools, to its maturity with more than 45; from two professors with a "good idea" to a universal method embraced by all faculty teaching methods courses. Day is an energetic, creative, and dynamic force whose innovative ideas, hard work, and sheer presence made Buffalo State's PDS consortium a distinctive program for which we have received multiple state and national awards.

Beyond the nuts and bolts of "how to do" a PDS, in "Professional Development School Partnerships As Creative Endeavors," Susan Keller-Mathers discusses how the PDS relationship itself creates a climate for creative work that engages both the school and the college partner together to respond to change, improve practice, support innovation, and act as one profession that benefits from many minds as well as many hands.

"PDS and Developing Literacy Strategy Instruction With Literacy Specialist Candidates and Elementary School Teachers" puts the focus on impact as Keli Garas-York presents her PDS graduate program for literacy specialists, employing a PDS to host a summer literacy clinic to assess and serve the literacy needs of children referred to the program by various school districts. In addition to gaining experience and expertise in diagnostic and prescriptive instruction for children and adolescents, the literacy specialist candidates practice their professional skills as literacy coaches working in tandem with the host schools' teachers.

Because Buffalo State is located directly in the center of metropolitan Buffalo, our access to urban high-needs schools is extraordinary. Whether these schools are public, private, or charter, experiencing teaching in an urban setting provides particular benefits for our teacher candidates. In "Raising the Bar for the ELA Field Experience: Teacher Candidates Partnering With Teachers in the RTI Instructional Program," Maria Ceprano reviews her many years of PDS work in a charter school in downtown Buffalo. She traces how the collaboration with Buffalo State's PDS program changed the school's methods of teaching literacy and

advanced their professional development in Response to Intervention frameworks for English language arts. Teacher candidates paired with practicing teachers provide important individual attention to students with special needs and become essential members of the instructional team needed to accomplish differentiated instruction, data-driven decision-making, and guided reading in small groups.

Broadening her teacher candidates' PDS experience in engaging with families to deepen literacy learning, Christine Tredo took her PDS candidates beyond the scheduled school day by working with her urban school to develop a districtwide literacy fair. For their innovative and well-managed event, Tredo and her candidates were honored with the district's prestigious Golden Apple Award for their outstanding contribution to the district. The literacy fair is now an annual event.

While the first PDS partnership began as a collaboration between one faculty member in the Department of Elementary Education and Reading and one faculty member in the Department of Exceptional Education, the growth of the PDS program has been largely enjoyed in the portion of early childhood, childhood, and exceptional education programs that focus on the pedagogy of regular classrooms. In "Preparing Special Education Teacher Candidates: Meeting Challenges Within a PDS Framework," the Exceptional Education faculty member Angela Patti addresses the problem of having fewer special educators in a single school and thus significantly fewer opportunities to place candidates majoring in special education in a single school setting. Patti describes how she utilized both the general instructional setting and consultant teachers in her PDS schools to demonstrate the mechanisms of inclusive practice and to illustrate the benefits to all children from differentiated practice. She adds how important her collaboration with the district teachers and administrators was in helping to devise a program that advanced the preparation of special educators and better served the needs of all children in the school district where her partnership was formed.

Not all PDS partnerships involve only methods courses or student teaching. Innovative afterschool and Saturday programs enrich the schooling experience for children and their families while helping teacher candidates learn their professional commitment to family, school, and community. In "The Book Club Recipe: Impacting Urban Literacy Through a PDS Partnership," Sherri Weber and school librarian Laura Thomson describe their Saturday morning book club. Its modest aim to "foster a love of reading" for children who attended the Saturday Book Club had a far-reaching impact. While serving the needs of children from families whose access to the tools of literacy could be constrained, candidate participants in the book club immediately dispelled any myths of "lowered expectations" for children who live with poverty.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic outcomes of a successful community partnership is described in "A Local PDS Turns Into a Global Book Hour" by Kim Truesdell, whose Introduction To Literacy Methods class introduced a service learning component. Each Saturday, teacher candidates would treat local children and families to read-alouds of multicultural children's books. Activities suggested

by the books might include music, art, crafts, and dance, all of which took place at our local Wegmans grocery store or at a locally owned laundromat. Serving neighborhood children and their families who included a significant number of recent immigrants and refugees from across the war-ravaged globe, teacher candidates engaged children in the loveliest of all literacy events: enjoying a book. For neophyte teachers who were skeptical about giving up their Saturdays to read books to kids in a laundromat or grocery store, the Global Book Hour quickly became one of the most transformative experiences they would have in their teacher education journey. Beyond observation and reflection, beyond a half hour of tutoring, beyond studying “about” language arts, the Global Book Hour brought home the lesson that children everywhere love to be read to; love to interact with each other and caring adults; and always surprised our candidates who clearly saw firsthand how the theories and methods they were learning worked in authentic settings with linguistically and culturally diverse kids.

One of the common themes in the following chapters is *PDS Responds to the Challenge*. One such challenge that curriculum in teacher preparation might “overlook” is the chaos of the school cafeteria. In “Creativity in the Cafeteria: A Pilot Study,” Laura Klenk reveals how she and one of the teachers in her PDS partner school took on the unruly behavior of the primary class lunchtime as an action-based research project. After reading research on the many problematic structures of school cafeterias that give rise to behavior problems and wasted food, the members of the PDS class brainstormed potential actions to address the reasons for such outrageous behavior. Through systematic behavior management and innovative modifications to both space and place, this action project in the PDS is currently in the pilot stage, working through trial and error to arrive at creative solutions.

As our PDS matured and our school partners measured consistent levels of impact from our presence, more faculty began to adapt our partnership collaboration to unique nonschool settings for children and families in need. Such a setting was Gerard Place, a transitional home for single parents and their children who are living in poverty. In “PDS in Exceptional Education Teacher Prep Programs: Everyone Wins,” Kathy R. Doody narrates her compelling and inspiring story about developing a PDS partnership to serve the needs of the neediest in our area while giving teacher candidates a chance to be a positive influence in the lives of children and families who are victims of poverty, substance abuse, and domestic violence. In a setting where a high percentage of the children have special needs, our candidates in exceptional education and early childhood education worked with Doody to help young single mothers learn the skills of communication and care that would support their children’s needs and strengthen their feelings of empowerment to change their own lives. Accepting the challenge to “create something out of nothing,” candidates who worked at Gerard Place learned to be resourceful, respectful, and responsive, all dispositional advantages in teaching that one cannot acquire from studying “about” them.

If there is one innovation in teaching practice that has caught fire, it is technologically-mediated learning. Kim Truesdell reveals how she used online resources to “enter” schools from a distance. In her chapter, “Mediated Observations in a PDS School Using Distance Learning Technology,” Truesdell brought her introductory teaching class “into” classrooms without leaving the campus. Using interactive videoconferencing, the on-campus class participated in mediated observations of an urban classroom without the unnecessary disruption of multiple classes, which had been the unintended effect of a 10-hour field assignment required in the Introduction to Teaching course. This practice had the added benefit of real-time discussions so that the teacher candidates could see the teaching practices they were studying enacted by skilled teachers in authentic classrooms; then with the guidance of their campus instructor, they deconstructed the observed session and reflected on what they saw.

An early innovator in the use of social media and technological resources in learning, Jevon D. Hunter, who held the Woods Beals Endowed Chair for Urban Education, takes readers on a fascinating journey in “Toward a Reimagined PDS (Cyber)Space for Literacy Learning and Teaching.” Beginning provocatively, “Coffeehouses can be peculiar places,” Hunter explains how learning spaces, like coffeehouses, can be reconceptualized to increase their “potential for productive and meaningful participation and engagement.” He shares several PDS partnership projects that put high-tech tools into the hands of teachers and learners. In his first project, Hunter, his PDS partner teachers, and his graduate literacy specialist candidates used iPads to assess and develop instructional apps for English learners. Adapting the tools of the teaching trade to better utilize the tools most likely already in the hands of today’s kids, they used *KidBlog*, a private, secure educational blogging platform that allows the graduate teachers to communicate continuously with their students, allowing them to address needs and design learning experiences through communication by social media. One of Hunter’s greatest successes was his project using Twitter to shorten the space between the teacher-reader and the student-reader in an urban high school English class, blurring the lines between teacher and learner by sharing the experience of reading with each other in nondidactic conversations that often took place after school.

In 20 years of the PDS experience, there have been some unexpected yet totally transformational developments that grew organically from the faculty who created unique partnerships. One of those developments was the blossoming of an international version of the PDS program: the IPDS. From her extensive travel experiences, background in social studies education, and total commitment to making the world a classroom for teacher candidates, Nancy Chicola writes of the growth and nurturing of the most extraordinary development in PDS since its inception in the early 1980s in “Low Cost/High Impact Path to Intercultural Competency Through International Professional Development Schools.” Capitalizing on the diversity of our faculty (who represent cultures from four continents outside North America), the Department of Elementary Education and Reading launched

a systematic program to bring the PDS experience to schools in Chile, Zambia, Beijing, Italy, Germany, and the Dominican Republic. By the same token, having a short-term but intense experience in a non-U.S. classroom, learning a new language, and adjusting to new cultures opened doors for our teacher candidates that they didn't even realize needed to be opened. Chicola traces the many arrangements and details of management that smoothed the way for these journeys.

Following Chicola's detailing of the process of developing our international PDS, Hibajene Mondo Shandomo delves more deeply into the etymology of her Zambian IPDS experience. Herself a native Zambian, in "Low Cost/High Impact Path to Intercultural Competency: The Example of IPDS Zambia," Shandomo tells her deeply personal story about taking her PDS candidates back to her former school, Libala Basic in Lusaka, Zambia. Starting as a pen-pal project between Libala and a PDS Buffalo Public School, the project made teacher candidates curious about the African school. When one of her candidates asked, "Dr. Shandomo, why don't you *take* us to Zambia," she took the suggestion seriously. Reflecting on four trips from 2012 to 2016, Shandomo catalogs her own learning and reflects on the unique ways that experiencing a school in another country, another culture, a world away from their own neighborhood schools, had expanded her teacher candidates' intercultural sensitivity along with their teaching skills.

During the same year that Shandomo began her IPDS in Zambia, Pixita del Prado Hill turned her 2011 Fulbright project in Santiago, Chile, into a sustained relationship with Universidad Mayor in that same city. Four years after the first IPDS in Chile, Angela Patti and Pixita del Prado Hill recall their experiences co-teaching in the IPDS school Escuela 25. In "Low Cost/High Impact Path to Intercultural Competency: The Example of IPDS Chile," Patti and del Prado Hill discuss how the complexities of learning a new language (Spanish) complicated but enriched the experience of their teacher candidates, who were primarily from English-only backgrounds. They transplanted the Global Book Hour to their school setting in Santiago and helped their candidates experience teaching in a bilingual school where the dominant language was Spanish. Likewise, an exchange was established with Universidad Mayor so that teacher candidates from that college might travel to Buffalo to learn about our schools and exchange ideas with the teacher candidates who would then in turn travel to Chile. Intercultural awareness all around!

One of the many lasting effects of the IPDS experience in Chile was that teacher candidates extended their interest in learning Spanish, and began to understand what a former professor of mine often said about Anglo-centric schooling in the United States, "Monolingualism can be cured!" Del Prado Hill describes "Club HoLA: When Teacher Candidates Become Language Learners Through PDS," a new club utilizing Spanish children's literature to develop Spanish fluency for teacher candidates, whose exposure to bilingual teaching whetted their appetites for more. With the guidance of a native Spanish speaker, participants read high quality bilingual (Spanish-English) children's literature about Latin America,

learning in an immersion model while enjoying the experience of reading about children from Latino cultures and reflecting on their feelings as they learned a new language.

Leslie Day, one of the greatest creative forces in the growth and development of Buffalo State’s PDS, reflects on “Teacher Candidates’ Roles in Professional Development Schools.” In this chapter, Day details the way that the PDS experience benefits teacher candidates, the schools in which they participate, the community where our many schools are housed, and the college itself. Through candidates’ participation in action-based research, their collaborative teaching with school professionals and each other, and the unique benefits of participating in multiple school and community settings, the PDS experience adds immeasurable qualities to the teacher candidate’s trajectory of highly personalized, reflective, and participatory growth in their teaching practice that cannot be replicated in a university classroom.

One of the greatest benefits of the PDS at Buffalo State is the development of long-lasting relationships with teachers and principals in our partner schools. Such relationships have broadened our understanding of the multiple roles of educational professionals and given us the opportunity to tap into expertise that may not be represented on the college faculty. One such relationship developed with a former PDS principal, community college partner, and now adjunct faculty member, Thomas McCully. His chapter, “PDS and The Leader in Me,” shows how a compelling idea such as FranklinCovey’s Leader in Me framework for whole-school improvement became a movement that caught fire in our community. Hearing from a highly effective leader who has had direct experience with the transformative power of Leader in Me on school leaders, teachers, parents, and even the youngest kindergarten children is a compelling argument for a program that can be replicated by anyone with a passion for helping each and every child believe in his or her own abilities, potential, and self-responsibility.

In their collaborative chapter “PDS and Faculty Collaboration Helped Two Professors Go From Assistant to Associate,” Kim Truesdell and Ellen Friedland reveal how their partnership and their PDS experiences helped them as assistant professors to participate in applied scholarship and high levels of service that supported their ascendancy in rank to associate professorship. Their PDS-based research on a Buddy Reading Program gave them both the impetus to investigate and document its benefits. By pairing older and younger readers, both Truesdell and Friedland engaged student participants in developing fluency and self-efficacy. The synergy of working together on this applied research brought both faculty members a joy of discovery that surprised them both. It is no surprise that they were both successful in their respective bids for tenure and promotion.

“Flipping the PDS” presents how author Dianne McCarthy returned to the elementary classroom long after her professional journey had taken her to the college classroom. Because of her close relationship with teachers and administrators at her PDS, they allowed her to “return” to an elementary teaching experience to co-

teach with her mentor teacher. The mentor teacher in whose classroom McCarthy worked writes that she appreciated the value of the “flipped” classroom where she felt her work with the class was extended and enhanced by having McCarthy co-teaching with her. She found that giving McCarthy some quality working with new mathematics standards and materials enhanced the practice of teacher candidates who would then learn from the multitiered instructional collaboration of master teacher and college faculty.

Essential Three of the NAPDS Nine Essentials, articulates the benefit of “ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need.” This emphasizes an exchange of benefits between the P-12 school and the college partner. In other words, the shared mission and vision of our mutual profession of teaching and school leadership unites the PDS partners, yet our growth is affected in different ways. “Creative Teaching, Scholarship, and Service Through PDS” by Pixita del Prado Hill explains how the many facets of applied scholarship available through site-based, clinically rich practice unite the teaching, scholarship, and service of an education faculty member, lending meaning and coherence to all three. Seeing her partner school as a rich arena for exploring herself as a teacher educator, making research-based advances in partnership with teachers, learning from current practice, and experiencing schools from the inside, coupled with a strong sense of commitment to make significant and sustained contributions to the community are extraordinary benefits for the college partner. In short, each partner becomes more than that partner might become alone. Mutuality, sustainability, impact, and advancement are shared values that have remarkable rewards for the entire profession.

In their final chapter, co-directors Pixita del Prado Hill and Leslie Day offer “Suggestions for Doing PDS” from first steps with new partnerships toward sustaining and nurturing growth and success. This chapter suggests that PDS partnerships are achievable regardless of the scale of the venture (remember we went from 4 to 45 schools), cross district, neighborhood, and even cultural boundaries, which spannd all aspects of the profession of teaching and educational leadership from the first semester introductory course of a novice to the research-based advancement of the profession itself.

In constructing this foreword, I have had the pleasure of reading the reflections and observations of the remarkable educators in this book, and as one of the first PDS educators in the very first partner school, I can attest with passionate conviction that the PDS program as described here exemplifies the model of teaching practice I set out on the first page. In short, we are better together than we ever were apart, and we have yet to know what more we *can* know. But from 20 years of PDS, we can testify that the journey will be fantastic.

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