



Southern California Professional Development Schools



Network News

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Message from the President

by Michael Cosenza, President, SCPDS

The year 2015 marks the fifth anniversary of the SCPDS. Over the past five years our organization has grown from an ad hoc group of PDS advocates to a non-profit professional organization. Along with celebrating our fifth anniversary we will be holding our fifth annual conference on Feb 5-6, 2016, at California Lutheran University. Our conference this year will take place over two days. Day 1 will include visits to PDS sites partnered with Cal Lutheran and Cal State Channel Islands and Day 2 will be a full day event with breakout sessions, panel discussions and a keynote address by author and professor, Dr. Hallie Yopp Slowik. Please check our website for details and registration (www.scpds.org).



As political and public scrutiny of teacher preparation programs continues to mount, one common theme that emerges is the need for universities to forge stronger partnerships with P-12 schools. Stronger relationships between universities and schools open the doors to opportunities for meaningful field experiences for aspiring teachers. The PDS model clearly offers the structure to meet this need and opportunity for partners to collaborate to provide reciprocal professional development to veteran teachers. The National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) developed “nine essentials” in 2008 to provide guidance for the creation and sustainability of PDS partnerships. We are devoting this issue of *Network News* to these “nine essentials” with interpretations from practitioners and stories from the field about what they mean and how they are used.

I hope you find this issue beneficial, and I look forward to seeing you in February at our annual conference.

Save the date!



SCPDS Fifth Annual Conference at California Lutheran University

Friday February 5 – School Tours
Saturday, February 6 – Conference Sessions

Register at www.scpds.org

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ESSENTIAL ONE: A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community

by Cynthia Coler, California State University, Channel Islands



The Professional Development School (PDS) mission must reflect the vision of all stakeholders involved in the partnership and be entirely inclusive, with all members growing professionally. Within the mission, there are two foci. The first focus is the improvement of P-12 learning for all students. The second focus is the improvement in teacher preparation at the university level. The range of the PDS mission extends beyond school walls into the local community, and sometimes also into commercial and government groups.

Key components of *Essential One* are that all students can learn and that P-12 schools need to have this as their foundational focus. Professional development of new or alternative strategies to support student learning may be requested from the PDS partnership by the school site members. The university would be able to work with the school site to provide the resources and human capital required to meet the professional development needs of the school staff.

Universities have a commitment to their teacher candidates to provide them with high quality learning, best practices, and fieldwork. University faculty have the opportunity to improve their teacher preparation programs by working closely with teachers who are in a PDS. Teaching university methods classes on the school site permits theory and practice to be modeled by utilizing best practices. At the request of the university professor, classroom teachers are able to model strategies and demonstrate lessons for teacher candidates.

A commitment by all PDS stakeholders to achieve the partnership mission of improving student learning can be achieved through the use of partner resources as well as resources gathered from community sources, including commercial businesses. Each PDS partnership's implementation of *Essential One* will not look the same due to the specific needs and focus of the partners. However, the foundational building blocks that improve their teacher preparation programs for a PDS begins with *Essential One*.

ESSENTIAL TWO: A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community

by Charmon Evans, University Preparation School at CSU Channel Islands

Establishing and maintaining a culture of collaboration takes time, trust, and shared reflective practice with open communication. Building a new PDS culture, a living organism, is not easy. It requires constant nurturing to be maintained. Trying to mesh the cultures of two separate organizations can only be achieved when there is a strong sense of shared purpose. Engaging in regular conversations centered on teacher preparation will ensure that the P-12 Professional Development School (PDS) and the university have a shared belief system and set of expectations. University faculty play an important role in maintaining a positive and productive culture in P-12 PDSs as they establish and maintain trusting relationships with P-



12 teachers and administrators. Taking the time to get to know the staff at the P-12 school will serve the university faculty well as they will be spending extended periods of time on campus.

For many P-12 schools, an ideological shift must take place in order to fulfill Essential 2 as a PDS. Teacher candidates can no longer be thought of as guests on campus, but must be considered contributing members of the school community. Including teaching candidates in staff development, teacher collaboration opportunities, and staff meetings are a few ways to embrace teacher candidates as members of the school community.

Giving the teacher candidate keys to the classroom is another way to let them know that the school honors them as a teacher on campus. The entire school community from the custodian, to the office staff, to the principal must all own the relationship with the University for Essential 2 to truly exist. Although it is understood that teacher candidates are on the P-12 campus to learn, showing them respect as teachers instills a sense of professionalism that can inspire them to rise to the occasion.

Accomplishing Essential 2 takes a commitment on the part of the P-12 school, P-12 teachers, and university faculty. A PDS is not just a place where teacher candidates go to student teach, it is a community where new teachers are grown.

ESSENTIAL THREE: Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need

by Emily Shoemaker, Wise Education Consultants



Ongoing, reciprocal professional development (RPD) based on the needs of partner institutions is a critical component of a viable and sustainable Professional Development School (PDS). “The intent of the professional development in a PDS is that it is specific to the PDS” (NAPDS, 2008). Moreover, it enhances opportunities for the emergence of an inquiry-based PDS culture that is similar to the cultures of the individual partners, yet unique to the PDS. Reciprocal professional development planning begins early on as leaders from the partner institutions engage in initial conversations about the potential reciprocal benefits of a partnership. These conversations are informal at first, but begin to formalize as the two partners build trust and respect for each other’s capacity for partnership building.

As trust and respect among key personnel develop into a school-university partnership, a more formal assessment of professional development needs can be conducted. There are a variety of approaches that can be taken to determine the professional development needs of each partner, ranging from conversations between individuals to systemic approaches. Using a systemic approach will allow partners to identify priority needs and match them with the knowledge and expertise of individuals in the partner institution. Once need and expertise are identified, additional factors come into play, such as arranging calendar days, time, facilities, and equipment necessary to implement successful reciprocal professional development school activities. Essential components of RPD include on-going reflection, collegiality, and collaborative discussion within the context of inquiry.

Just as there are multiple approaches to identifying RPD needs and matching expertise, there is a wide range of professional development configurations in a PDS. All of them, however, involve a commitment to advancing equity within schools; involving candidates in school activities; and engaging in innovating

practices. Our experiences in PDSs tell us that a comprehensive RPD program will most likely include many, if not all, of the following types of professional development activities:

- sharing information about the standards, curriculum, and instructional practices that characterize each partner’s programs, including developing a common professional development language
- expanding personal and collective knowledge and expertise through reading professional literature, observing others’ instructional practices, attending conferences, and making presentations
- reflecting on instructional practice related to student and candidate learning, including engaging in action research projects
- making individual and collegial inquiries into classroom-based practices, including receiving feedback
- participating in teacher- supervisor-candidate triads aimed at improving instructional practices
- engaging in small group seminars and discussions, and
- holding whole-school and/or program-wide workshops.

When partner schools and universities gather their resources, strengthen their capacities and create learning situations in which everyone learns and grows, PDSs have an increased chance for sustainability.

NAPDS (2008). *What it means to be a professional development school: A statement by the executive council and board of directors of the National Association for Professional Development Schools*. Retrieved from www.napds.org, October 9, 2015.

ESSENTIAL FOUR: A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants

by Manuel Correia, California State University, Channel Islands, Danna Lomax, Ventura Unified School District and Monica Osborn, Denver Public Schools

Professional Development Schools (PDSs) tend to be innovative and collaborative by nature. Teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, university faculty, students, parents, and administrators all work together with a central focus on providing improved and enhanced educational opportunities for all P-12 students. Participants in PDSs strive to be innovative by implementing new research and approaches to teaching and learning. Open classrooms, multi-age classrooms, flipped classrooms, project-based learning, teacher-developed curriculum, student-led lessons, parent-teacher conferences, and community based learning are all examples of innovative practices. Innovative contexts create a space for teachers and students to take risks and explore the full range of expression.



Reflective collaboration, a space where teachers think about their practice and the curriculum, is a valued and integral part of a PDS. Daily collaboration is built into the schedule at our PDS. This time is called Active Collaboration Teacher Time (ACTT) and is a one-hour period each day during which teachers,

teacher candidates, and on occasion, university faculty meet to discuss issues and topics related to the school community. Teachers see collaboration as more than talking about teaching methods and sharing curriculum binders; it is a shared space to link theory and practice and co-create curriculum and community learning and teaching.

The ideas, strengths, and perspectives teachers bring to the learning community are an inspiration to all. Dedicated time for collaboration is especially important because it creates a space for teachers to share their experiences and expertise. The constant stream of questions that flow through a teacher's mind as they listen to, notice, and teach children guides their practice; these questions help them choose their direction and make decisions about the teaching and learning process. In fact, many teachers are very thoughtful and come up with innovative ways to be conscious about their practice and reflect on their day, whether it is through a journal or a quick debrief with the teacher next door. Dedicating time for teachers to discuss their ideas, questions, and concerns is vital to their growth and well-being.

A PDS context serves as a learning laboratory for the development of teachers and teacher candidates. When cooperating teachers observe teacher candidates in the process of finding their own teaching style and voice, they become outwardly reflective and realize how much they have to offer students and teacher candidates. Teachers constantly try to improve practice, delve deeper into content, and create optimal learning experiences for students. As cooperating teachers mentor teacher candidates, they discuss not only the nuts and bolts of pacing, content, and classroom community, but also the pedagogy and intentionality of teaching decisions.

ESSENTIAL FIVE: Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants

by Belinda Karge, Concordia University Irvine



Reflection of best practice is critical to all Professional Development School (PDS) research. Essential five encourages schools to plan and routinely take part in research that leads to reflection and feedback as value added to a university-school partnership. Furthermore, when schools communicate their investigative results with others, many can benefit. In the report, *What It Means to Be a Professional Development School*, (NAPDS, 2008) various forms of sharing are suggested, including conference presentations, school site discussions, presentations to school boards and parent organizations as well as community forums.

Orangeview Junior High in Anaheim Union High School District has participated in a PDS relationship with California State University Fullerton (CSUF) for many years. Within the first two years of their co-teaching model, the special education scores rose over 100 points on State standardize testing. The model began as a result of co-teaching techniques being taught to the Orangeview staff by faculty at CSUF. Recently co-teachers from the school have been collaborating with colleagues at CSUF providing professional development training for other schools in the area who are interested in general education and special education co-teaching.

An additional example of the results of deliberate investigations of practice is discussed by Cunningham (2014) in the book *Professional Development Schools: Creative Solutions for Educators*. At Mariposa Elementary School in Brea Unified School District administration reached out to CSUF faculty after a request by the teachers for support with a changing demographic of children and necessity to work with English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with Special Needs. The seventeen-year PDS

partnership was born from this request. Through the years, the school has demonstrated significant academic gains and student outcomes as a direct result of the investigative forums and professional coaching that have taken place between the university and the educators at the site. These data have been presented to the school board and at national conferences.

Santiago Elementary School in Santa Ana Unified School District determined they have a disproportionate number of ELLs in Special Education due to the limited referral and testing processes (Olivas, 2014). One of their teachers worked with a professor from CSUF to interview school psychologists from diverse backgrounds about experiences and determination of the identification process. The results indicate that ELL students are increasingly likely to be identified as having a learning disability and are less likely to be served in the least restrictive environment. Suggestions for formative and summative assessment led to changes at the school.

At all three schools, the PDS partnership with the university allowed for collaborative conversations and reflection that led to the experiences reported above. The data gathered and disseminated by each site is a strong example of PDS Essential Five.

Cunningham, H. (2014) in Ferrara, J. *Professional Development Schools: Creative Solutions for Educators*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

NAPDS (2008). *What it means to be a professional development school: A statement by the executive council and board of directors of the National Association for Professional Development Schools*. Retrieved from www.napds.org, December 8, 2014.

Olivas, E. (2014). Misidentification of English Language Learners in Special Education. (unpublished master's thesis, CSU, Fullerton).

ESSENTIAL SIX: An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved

by Michael Cosenza, California Lutheran University

Professional Development School (PDS) partnerships have four primary goals that are at the very heart of the relationship:

1) They are a place for teacher candidates to gain clinical experience from experienced cooperating teachers; 2) they are a place for experienced P-12 teachers to become reinvigorated in their profession; 3) they are a place for university faculty and teachers to reconnect theory to practice; and 4) they are a place for P-12 students to benefit from student-centered teaching methodology, including co-teaching strategies.



In addition to these four overarching goals, it is important for the partners to explore the potential of the new relationship and to determine how each partner will contribute to attaining the goals. The development of an articulation agreement in the form of a formal contract, or a memorandum of understanding (MOU), is a key aspect of PDS work to make certain that the partnership meets the needs of all the stakeholders.

In my personal experience regarding the creation of new PDSs, I have discovered that the development of the agreement is least effective if developed in advance, or if a template is used assuming it will work

for all partnerships. Sample documents are a great resource to start with, but each new partnership deserves a unique articulation agreement.

A respectable articulation agreement consists of both standard and negotiated language. Standard language includes clauses about insurance liability, indemnification, and workers compensation policies. Negotiated language includes a brief description of the program, the responsibilities for each party (the practical issues), details for governance (steering committee), operational and funding issues, in-kind services, program evaluation, and a specific term (in years).

A new partnership should begin with the creation of a steering committee that includes all stakeholders. This typically includes: P-12 teachers, teacher candidates, P-12 administrators, university faculty, and parents of P-12 students. The initial meetings should focus on the agreement by addressing the four overarching goals and the practical matters that need to be in place for success. Some examples of what I refer to as practical matters include: parking issues, stipends, release time, technology, classroom space, access to curriculum, security procedures, ID badges, Wi-Fi access, professional development expectations, and meeting frequency. Though there may be more, these are the types of issues that are not usually given careful thought prior to the partnership. Misinterpretations and assumptions surrounding practical issues can quickly cause the unraveling of the relationship and should be clearly addressed in the articulation agreement.

Another effective method to create a strong articulation agreement is for the partners to agree to a one-year pilot. During the pilot the committee can actively seek feedback from the highly involved participants in the PDS. The steering committee should continue to meet using information to address concerns, discuss misunderstandings, and affirm strengths. At the end of the pilot year, a revised articulation agreement can be written, taking into account what was learned. This second version becomes a stronger document because of the additional time and thought.

PDSs require a great level of trust and persistent relationship building. The ideas I put forth in this description of this Essential are based on my personal successes and disappointments. The four overarching goals are complex, and following a thoughtful process to develop a clear articulation agreement will increase the likelihood of success and a strong foundation for a long-term partnership.

ESSENTIAL SEVEN: A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration

by Jackie Allen, University of La Verne



The organizational structure of any group, association, or movement is vital to the success of that entity. An organizational structure must be in place through regularly-scheduled meetings, both formal and informal, to ensure ongoing communication.

The organizational structure serves as spokes that hold the institution's wheel together and provides the pattern of movement. The outer rim of the wheel might be chrome and bright and brilliant like the logo or the splashy advertisement or brochure telling the advantages of belonging to a particular organization, but the arrangement of the spokes is really what holds the wheel together and provides substance to the organization. The lines of communication, events, dedicated leadership, bylaws and incorporation documents, committee structure, fundraising, publicity, and marketing are the spokes of a viable

organization. As with the wheel, the spokes can become tarnished with road dirt and oil and grease the mere fact that the spokes continue to support the wheel, allowing the car to run, is what is most important in providing the forward movement of any organization.

When I think of this essential I am always reminded of the formation of the Southern California Professional Development Schools (SCPDS) consortium. When likeminded Southern California educators devoted to the Professional Development School (PDS) movement came together five years ago, conceptually forming a local organization sounded like a great idea. Theoretical foundations were provided through research articles, national conference workshops, and the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS). What remained was the development of a structure to support our collective ideas, energy, and commitment. Initially we decided to form a board of interested committed individuals who would provide the core group to launch the organization. Out of that group officers were chosen (President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and the work began. All organizations need a financial base from which to operate so an annual conference was proposed to provide visibility and service to members of the new organization and provide operational funds. From those humble beginnings a structure began to evolve: an annual conference, biannual board meetings, bylaws for governance, a News Magazine for communication, committees to come up with ideas and actualize those ideas, formation of a formal 501c3 structure for tax purposes, marketing strategy, and then finally a website. Through recent strategic planning efforts our organization proposed standing committees and a recognition program. The annual conference held at regional venues was designed to provide professional development and means of communication for teachers, teacher candidates, and university faculty.

The formation of SCPDS represents our local Southern California efforts to provide the opportunity for educators to communicate at annual conferences and through the newsletter; reflect on accomplishments and share them in professional development workshops; collaborate on joint university PDS projects such as the PDSEA training; and set up our own governance structure using strategic planning. We have provided a home for dedicated PDS aficionados in Southern California.

ESSENTIAL EIGHT: Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings

by Marilyn Buchanan, California State University, Channel Islands

Once institutions commit to each other and establish a mutually agreeable mission and governance structure, the successful PDS partnership creates opportunities for active involvement from members of both the school and university partners. Regular participation is needed through both formal and informal roles. Formal roles are established to achieve necessary functions defined by the partners; they have specific titles and detailed expectations and responsibilities. Examples of such roles for either or both the school or university personnel might be: site liaison, student teaching facilitator or co-teaching coordinator.

During 14 years of PDS partnership University Preparation School (UPS) and CSU Channel Islands have employed various formal roles. They established a PDS liaison at both sites. Supported by release time from their usual work tasks, the liaisons acted as contact point persons, they arranged for teachers and faculty to act as guest lecturers and consultants to each other during program design, preparing course modifications, at faculty meetings, and to teach methods courses. There are roles reserved for partners on the School



of Education's Advisory Board as well as on UPS's Board of Directors and, School Advisory Council. There are two Co-teaching Coordinators, one of the positions supported by the university and one by the school. Together they plan and present orientations and trainings for all of the co-teachers in the partner schools network and for candidates contemplating enrolling in the residency option. Another formal responsibility is to make the best possible placements for candidates matching co-teachers by personalities, preferences, dispositions, strengths and needs. This responsibility is assumed by people from both sites: a teacher on leave from UPS and the Director of Field Placements at the university.

For each PDS partnership, as with any job description, roles and their responsibilities need to be locally defined. Therefore, what site liaison or co-teaching coordinator means, and what functions they carry out, varies widely due to situational factors, but across PDSs their purpose is to maintain an environment that is effective, beneficial, and successful for all parties.

Likewise, informal roles help the PDS function effectively. While formal roles often are explicitly stated in any articulated agreement or MOU between the PDS partners, informal roles are usually not precisely addressed. Informal roles tend to be short-term, changeable, and situation-specific, often shouldered by a number of individuals. University Charter Middle School hosts a week long summer STEM event for local educators and teacher candidates; each of the sessions is planned and presented by a teacher and university faculty pair with teacher candidate assistance in presenting the session. This year's focus will be on Mathematics and Robotics. While the structure will remain the same, different faculty members and candidates will take on the roles of planners and presenters. There will be regular meetings, shared and specific responsibilities; both institutions will contribute and benefit, but the roles are temporary, short lived and specific to the task at hand.

Although schools and universities retain their own mission statements and differing institutional cultures, the informal and formal roles and responsibilities span boundaries allowing partners to focus on shared values and goals and find ways to align commonalities in ways that strengthen relationships and realize the mission of the PDS.

ESSENTIAL NINE: Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures

by Jackie Allen, University of La Verne

The Professional Development School (PDS) process is by definition and nature a shared process, in which local schools and universities collaborate to improve teaching practices and provide best practice in programs for teacher candidates. Some recognition of outstanding cooperating teachers, collaborative efforts, and commendable programs may be provided by local schools and districts, and state and national organizations. In reality, much of the rewards are actually intrinsic to those dedicated teachers in local schools and universities. The Southern California Professional Development Schools (SCPDS) consortium, which produces this newsletter as a member benefit, is instituting a recognition program for Beginning Teacher Award and School Partnership Award, to be recognized at the 2016 SCPDS Conference. At the 2017 conference Collaborating Teacher of the Year Award and Research Award will be given.

At the University of La Verne, PDS work began seven years ago. Initially it was solely a teacher education partnership with an elementary school that the university was working with to provide professional development and placement for teacher candidates. As the work progressed over the years and a multidisciplinary collaboration evolved including school counseling, administration, and school

psychology, it was discovered that an existing partnership and shared resources between the university and the nearby Child Development Center (CDC) existed and should be included in the PDS program. A university professor teaches at the CDC and supervises university child development internship training and field experiences there. School psychology candidates visit the center to learn about pre-school instructional methods and techniques. Another program combines resources with two university child development professors and early childhood student teachers to provide the Little Cubs Program (LCP) for preschool children and their parents at one of the PDS partner schools. The goal of the LCP is to develop and reinforce readiness skills for students entering kindergarten or first grade in the future.



A new program is underway in the 2015-2016 school year. A university professor and school psychologist are offering a series of workshops on child development and the brain entitled “Crazy About You- Putting Together Strong Brains.” The series of four evening workshops emphasizes brain development, parenting for brain growth, relationship building with the brain in mind, and the brain and behavior. Parents of preschool children and CDC faculty and staff are invited to participate in the interactive series of workshops.

The Early Childhood faculty, other university faculty, teacher candidates, CDC staff, and parents are all learning together with dedication to improving their skills for the benefit of the preschool children.

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See you at the SCPDS Conference!