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Case for Professional Development Schools: Transforming Teaching and Learning

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Case for Professional Development Schools: Transforming Teaching and Learning

Keywords

student learning, collaborative teaching, experiential learning

Disciplines

Christianity | Teacher Education and Professional Development

Comments

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A case for

Professional Development Schools

Transforming Teaching and Learning

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Professional Development Schools Defined

- Partnerships formed by teacher education programs and exemplary P-12 schools.
- Comparable to teaching hospitals – real world experiences and opportunities for teachers-in-training
- Collaborative
- Paradigm shift

Four Goals of PDSs

Main Goal: Improvement of P-12 student learning

1. Preparation of teacher candidates
2. Reflective inquiry
3. Professional development for practicing K-12 teachers

Our history....

- **December 2008:**
 - received funding to attend the NPDS Conference in Daytona Beach; secured a grant to begin a 3-year pilot PDS program
- **Year 1 (2009-2010)**
 - Research, discovery, planning
 - Working collaboratively in planning stage with 1 partner school

- **Years 2 -3 (2010-2012)**
 - Placement of interns – expanded from 1 to 3 PDS sites
 - Growing pains/mistakes, corrections
 - Overall assessment = moderately successful

- **Years 4-5 (2010-2014)**
 - Expansion – more interest from interns and potential PDS partners
 - More growing pains/mistakes and corrections
 - Overall assessment = success

- **Year 6 (2014-2015)**
 - \$300,000 grant from State of Iowa to study feasibility and sustainability
 - 20% of TE candidates
 - First interns placed in secondary setting
 - Continued experimentation with collaborative models

Characteristics of Successful Collaborative Partnerships

- Mutual trust and respect
- Shared decision making/ information sharing and communication
- Manageable agenda
- Dynamic nature

Key components of our PDS project

1. Enhanced preparation of pre-service teachers

- Extended clinical experience
- Co-teaching with mentor teachers
- Theory and practice connections

Extended Clinical Experience

- Lots of opportunities in early field experience – foundations, tutoring, methods
- Senior yearlong experience
- Fall semester: M- Thursday mornings – on site
 - Afternoons – on campus
 - Connected courses in methods and applied educational psychology

Co-teaching with Mentor

- St. Cloud State Model
- Fall – Mentor = Lead, Intern = Support
- Spring – shift
- Intern = Lead, Mentor = Support

Theory/Practice Connections

- History of competition rather than cooperation
- History of hierarchical relationships
- The research is clear that within 2 years of graduation, new teachers adopt the practices and philosophy of the district in which they teach
- Strong links between work in classroom and in college courses

Key Component #2

Enhanced Professional Development for Mentor Teachers

- Mentor and Co-Teaching Training
- Co-teaching Methods and Educational Psychology Courses
- Professor-in-Residence/Instructional Coaching Opportunities

Mentor and Co-teaching Training

- 2-day training in August
- Mentor training – instructional coaching
- Co-teaching training – St. Cloud Train-the-Trainer
- Ongoing training throughout the year
- Bi-weekly mentor meetings

Co-teaching College Courses

- ½ day workshop in early August
- Full input, voluntary

- Restructuring Math and Reading Methods
- Restructuring Applied Educational Psychology
 - Teacher Talks
 - Teaching Rounds
 - Look and Learn
 - Station Teaching

Instructional Coaching/ Professor-in-Residence

- Relationship building
- trust/ vulnerability
- Co-teaching wth LA teacher

Key Component #3

Research and Inquiry into Best Practices

TIPS

- Collaborative research on females with Asperger's
- Reading and Math Interventions

Lessons Learned

- Shifting paradigms are messy
- True collaboration takes a significant and intentional investment
- Strong, collaborative partnerships positively impact all stakeholders

Do Professional Development Schools Make a Difference?

- Better teacher candidate preparation = lower attrition
- PDS teacher candidates outperform traditional teacher candidates
- Improvement in math and literacy scores in PDS schools
- Our experience in a young, rural PDS project

The future....

- Continued expansion of our partner schools – 2 new ones added for 2015, 4-5 in the wings
- Working of TTP revamp – freeing up the senior year
- Possibly moving to complete PDS model

Darling-Hammond notes

“If PDSs become the doorways that all new teachers pass through as they launch their careers, they can transform the culture of teaching and the expectations of collaboration along with the nature of teaching and learning in individual classrooms.”