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ABSTRACT

Findings from a 3-year participant/observer documentation study are examined from the perspective of individuals (teachers, principals, college faculty) and from the perspective of developing the Professional Development School (PDS) as a learning community group. The study identifies four phases that individuals experienced during the three years of PDS development which were documented. The phases are labeled: Me; My Practice; My Beliefs about Teaching and Learning; Learners; and Commitment. Leadership tasks associated with each phase are also identified. From the group perspective, stage theory is used to explore the development process associated with establishing PDSs. The PDSs progessed through five cycles: (1) aggregate, (2) small group work, (3) the school, (4) professional community, and (5) restructuring and self governance. Within each cycle, the PDS learning community went through five stages: beginnings, establishing expectations, identifying and resolving conflict, supporting and expanding the community, and transitions. The report contains a chart which summarizes the group development cycles and stages and a diagram which summarizes the stages through which teacher educators passed during the PDS development process. (IAH)

Professional Development Schools:

Emerging Changes in Educators

and the Professional Community

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Running head: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

Professional Development Schools:
Emerging Changes in Educators and the
Professional Community

Professional Development Schools (PDSs) are new. As could be expected in this reform effort, some institutions have simply identified a particular school and labeled it a PDS. However, in other places college faculty, deans, provosts, school district administrators, parents, business, teachers, and unions are deliberating about the nature of the PDSs, the partnerships', and the process for creating them. In still other sites thoughtful, collaborative, and reflective deliberations are occurring concurrently with in-process PDS development. This report is based on the study of Professional Development Schools who are involved concurrently in the processes of design, implementation and reflection.

Data for this report comes from a three year long participant/observer documentation study. The documentation began at the time that the PDS concept was introduced into the cultures of one midwest university and four nearby school districts (two suburban and two urban districts).

At the time of this report the length of time that the schools studied were engaged in becoming PDSs ranged from three months to over three years. Six of seven potential PDS schools in the two urban settings are the focus of this report.

The Professional Development Schools included in this study use as guidelines for their design and implementation, the National Holmes Group's six principles (Holmes, 1991): 1) teach for life-long understanding; 2) hold these ambitious goals for all people's children; 3) create learning communities and learn community; 4) places for adults to learn; 5) places for inquiry and

reflection; and 6) new institutions created from the partnerships of schools, university, and community members. These Professional Development Schools will be entire buildings and function like teaching hospitals. Eventually a district cluster will include two elementary, a middle school and a high school.

In this report two perspectives are presented concerning the creation of a PDS. The first is the perspective of individual changes and the second is from the perspective of the development of the PDS as a learning community group.

Development of a Professional Development School from Individual Perspective

This section includes a description of actions, reported thoughts and generalizations about phases individuals (teachers, university, administrators, community) experience as a member participating in the creation of a PDS. Helpful and unhelpful leadership tasks are also described.

Findings from our study to date resulted in the identification of four phases individuals experienced over a three year period of PDS development. We labeled the four phases as: 1) Me; 2) My Practice; 3) My Beliefs about Teaching and Learning; and 4) Learners. A fifth phase has begun to emerge. A likely name for this phase will be commitment. Figure One illustrates the reactions of each role group in each of the five phases. (Please see Figure One in Appendix.)

Phase One: Me. The first phase that members of new PDSs report they experience is that of "what will all of this mean to me?" In this first phase individuals focus on their immediate needs, on their personal interpretation of the concept of a PDS and then on the idea of becoming involved in something that is abstract but clearly related to one's practice (e.g., teaching, administration, teacher preparation, counseling, staff development). In this first phase there are a variety of individual responses to the initiation of the development of PDS relationships.

For example, initially teachers and administrators react to the Professional Development School concept as if it is a "new project." To teachers and administrators the project interpretation means that one or two people could "do this" and that others in the school do not need to be concerned. Teachers report that initially, as an individual, they thought about whether they would become involved and did not consider the implications of their involvement or lack of it on others or the effect others' decisions would have on them. Those who chose to be involved began to worry about how others would feel when they received attention and resources not available to everyone. For others, the most frequent concern was that they would not be allowed to participate. Who would not allow this was the popular "they." Interview data suggests that in this initial phase, some people simply are "waiting until this too passes."

We found that the last school to consider becoming a PDS moved to a school wide educational reform interpretation after visiting PDSs in other districts. This occurred about four months into their initial exploration period. This suggests that changes in reactions in the first phase may change as concrete examples of PDSs are available for observation. Even within schools that make "school-wide decisions" (e.g., site-based managed) the above concerns and the project interpretation were found.

Our data indicates that in the first phase individual university PDS members react in at least five ways. The first group is composed of teacher educators and researchers whose reaction is that they do not want to be a part of a PDS because: 1) they fear loss of total control over what they and the teachers will do and how it will be done; 2) they are fearful of working in schools; or 3) they feel that working in schools would make them second class professors when compared to their colleagues who maintain traditional university roles.

A second reaction is that PDS reform work is a way to gain easy entry into a school to do their own research. People with this reaction have as their mission gaining acceptance of their treatment or inquiry questions so that they can collect their research data. Their goal is to gain short term entry into the "PDS group" for the purpose of doing their study rather than as a long term member of a reform community. A third group is composed of those who see the PDS effort as a means to "fix" teachers, administrators, teacher educators and/or children. This reaction results in focusing their initial work "capturing" how "awful" current school practice is. For some, the initial work turns to the study of "how teachers" change, resist change or how their own instruction of the students demonstrates that "teachers are wrong." A fourth group includes faculty whose first reaction is to form partnership relationships with teachers. Identifying individual teacher partners and defining relationships for the purpose of inquiry and keeping things within an intimate group are two of their initial concerns. Study of instruction is their primary interest. School wide reform is not on their agenda. The fifth group includes those who see the PDS work as a way to create partnerships with others and work on educational reform in schools and universities. They see their role developing as they explore the site, problems and relationships with teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members. These people become members of the school-wide PDS community and contribute to the well being of the entire community. They work to create quality inquiry partnerships. These projects are worked out collaboratively and result in the professional development of all those involved. The fifth group is concerned about general reform in curriculum and instruction. They seem to reflect the principle "teach all people's children so they are successful" in their work.

Administrators' first reactions to PDS involvement include a need to: 1) control and manage; 2) support, share and question; or 3) communicate excitement about involvement while working to keep people from being involved. In our study three of the six original principals had a real choice about becoming involved in PDS work. Two principals, within six months of retirement, were told to support teachers who wanted to work with the university. A third was pushed by a group of teachers to "go along with their desire" to explore. Since the beginning, two new principals took positions in buildings that were exploring PDS.

We found that principals who are open to the reform focus on providing quality experiences for students. Those that are cautious and manipulative focus on their image and how things appear.

Leadership in this first phase is provided at first by "designated" leaders. Informal leaders emerge as the phase comes to an end. Individuals report that in the first phase, leadership that facilitates progress included discussions resulting in individual verbalization of preconceptions of teaching and learning and visions about what PDS means. Discussions about visions for schooling contribute to members developing shared understandings about each others' values. In the first PDSs these activities were done to help school and university people become acquainted. However, it was found that teachers and administrators who worked together for 15 or more years knew very little about what went on in each other's classrooms or what others believed and valued.

Second leadership tasks that supported a variety of activities contributed to members initially feeling that there was a place for them. Individuals felt that they could find the kind of reform work that connected to their interests and students needs.

A third helpful leadership task was the creation of a reallocated time system for school/university whole group and small group planning, and deliberation time. Working out systems for reallocated time early in the project contributed to breaking the traditional "teacher role" paradigm (teachers are with students or they aren't working).

Leadership that demands all new structure be generated by the new group is seen as unorganized and without direction. On the other hand, leadership that supports traditional public school norms (e.g., the power resides in the principal) contributes to keeping the status quo rather than educational reform.

Phase Two: My Practice. In the second phase the focus for the teachers is on: 1) working at the project level; 2) raising personal concerns about what is going on and how it is being done; and 3) experiencing and working out concerns about too much to do, too much to think about, too little time, and too fast of a pace.

In this phase individuals focus on concerns about their own practice. We found that administrators developed this concern months after the teachers and teacher educators. We are unsure whether administrators reach this phase later than teachers and teacher educators, as our data indicates, or if it may be that leadership did not support the administrators to focus on their own practices until much later in the PDS development.

Teachers and administrators found that the new PDS work kept them busy in ways they felt were excessive. They communicated interest and a need to be involved in everything that was going on. Some teachers reported that this was because they had not had an opportunity to talk with or be treated as professionals since they began their teaching careers. Finding hours in the days that were already filled with correcting papers and other traditional

teacher work was a challenging task. Finding cognitive space was equally difficult. (In later phases, teachers reported that part of their feelings of "busyness" in this phase came from the fact that they were "thinking about their teaching all the time.")

Having time to talk and debrief about classroom activities is an on going concern in this phase. Raising personal concerns about what is going on in the broader PDS activities in the school, and how it is being done is a consistent need. Thus having a forum for these discussions becomes useful. It is during this phase that most PDS members report that they are experiencing concerns about too much to do, too much to think about, too little time, and too fast of a pace.

In the second phase helpful leaders are seen to support movement forward on parallel tasks. Reportedly this provides a way for a variety of agendas to begin to move forward. It is through this parallel work and time to talk to others that individuals begin to see how ideas might merge.

We found that individuals appreciated leadership support for their project level initiatives at this time. Where possible helpful leaders support the coordination of project efforts in this phase. This contributes to individual members seeing how their study of practice fits conceptually with the concerns and interests of others.

In addition, in this phase, leaders provided a means for generating questions about: organization of school, university teacher education programs, curriculum, instruction, and learning. Providing opportunities to explore visions and coordination of ideas related to these broader topics contributes to supporting individual's concerns about their own practices and the movement toward a coordinated agenda of reform work at a particular school.

Phase Three: Beliefs About Teaching/Learning. In the third phase individuals report that their PDS work challenges what they have believed about teaching, learning, leadership, and learners. Teachers and teacher educators as individuals report that they find that as they try different instructional methods their beliefs about learning and learners are brought into question. For example, one teacher educator who believed in "tracked" science courses, reported that student outcomes are influenced by instruction, content and the teacher's understanding of the "students' context" rather than merely formal learning as prior thought. A classroom teacher who believed that students would learn what they were taught if "we fixed their self-esteem" said she changed her thinking to "self-esteem is connected to the students' success in learning." (Putnam, 1992) She reports that she now believes that how she teaches and what she teaches contributes to the pupils' success.

It is in this phase that individuals confront their own beliefs about particular learners. For example, teachers, teacher educators and administrators find that while they have "said" for years that all students can learn, they may not really have believed that. In this phase individuals confront the conflicts between their stated beliefs and their actions. This period is when individuals feel challenged about their own professional knowledge and their ability to foster learning for all students.

In this third phase, a specific leadership task school and university PDS members report they find helpful is: support for thinking and talking about one's beliefs about teaching and learning. Participants report having leaders challenge or at least support others in challenging the current state of curriculum, instruction, learning outcomes, and/or organization facilitates the professional development of individuals in a PDS. Finding potential relationships with parents, business community and neighborhood members that

have not existed also acts a challenge and thus facilitates changes in the thinking of individuals.

Leadership also effects the roles of administrators. One administrator reports that he began to consider different ways to do his work and later considered what work he should do once a university person began to ask "why" things were done as they were. Another administrator reported that he found himself wondering what his role would be in a PDS once he began to participate with teachers and university members in shared decision making.

Phase Four: Learners. In the fourth phase PDS members focus on learners. In this phase teachers, administrators and teacher educators report that their concerns are about knowing individual students and understanding the school/neighborhood context. All three groups become concerned with figuring out what they need to know and do in order to promote all students' success and achievement. This may be because initial changes in curriculum and instruction are once again being challenged, as they are not having the desired effects. Or it might be because success with some learners contributes to members being able to add new concerns to their reform agendas.

Concerns with how everything in the building is being run now becomes a concern. Fair representation rather than total involvement in everything is now possible. All members begin to make clear decisions about how much time and energy they will spend on teaching and leadership tasks.

Finally, it is in this phase that individuals become comfortable in changing how things are done. Change is now viewed as a way to create better experiences for children. Reform appears to be a real possibility.

In the fourth phase, we found that leaders' support for research and evaluation of school and classroom projects is valued. Teachers who initially did not want to have anything to do with research now see the value of inquiry

for solving teaching/learning problems.

Helpful leadership supports the use of technology in this stage. This may contribute to organizational change. The challenging of structures that take up time and interfere with progress becomes an agenda item and needs support from leadership. Finally, in this phase working out strategies to implement long range inquiry and re-construction plans is critical to the individuals continued development.

Phase Five: Commitment. Recent data supports the idea that individuals are beginning to figure out or question their commitments to the learning process. For example, teacher educators appear to be making commitments to the school and community and/or university educational reform. Others are withdrawing from agendas to bring about increased student outcomes to move to new locations to start over. Teachers are questioning their roles in bringing about pupils' understanding of school subject matter. Some administrators are struggling with original commitments to share power. A sense of the difficult nature of educational reform in a specific context seems to have become a shared understanding. It is to this perspective of reality (difficult educational reform) that individuals are clarifying their commitments. In this phase serious questions occur about how one spends time and the results of that investment on one's own practice and learner outcomes.

Schein (1988) suggests that when individuals enter new groups, as in the case of the Professional Development School educational reform, they must resolve several issues before they feel comfortable in the new group. These issues include: identify, control and influence, needs and goals, and acceptance and intimacy. The identity issue involves resolving the question "Who am I to be?" The question asked in the control and influence issue is "Will I be able to control and influence others?" "Will the group goals

include my own needs?" is the question in the needs and goals issue. Finally in the acceptance and intimacy issue, the questions are "Will I be liked and accepted by the group? How close a group will we be?" While these issues and questions are somewhat different than the ones we have identified, the focus on resolving personal issues first (before one focuses on children and their learning) is similar.

Development of the PDS from the Perspective of the Group

We have used group development theory to describe our findings of the processes involved in the establishment of Professional Development Schools.

Our initial review of the theories and stages of group development suggests that they are quite similar to one another. The stages of group development outlined by numerous authors were overlapping in theory and in their practical description of the evolving group processes. The similarities existed not only within a particular field (i.e. within educational research) but across disciplines. The stages of group development found in the educational literature (Stanford, 1977; Putnam & Burke, 1992) were nearly the same as those outlined in the psychological literature (Tuckman, 1965; Yalom, 1970; Caple, 1978; Beeber, 1988).

For example, Tuckman (1965) proposed forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning; Yalom (1970) suggested there is orientation, conflict, cohesiveness, and termination; Stanford (1977) described beginnings, establishing expectations, identifying and resolving conflicts, supporting and expanding the group, and disbanding; Caple (1978) used orientation (dependence vs. independence), conflict (control vs. adaptation), integration (implicit vs. Explicit social structure), achievement (intellectualizing vs. implementation), and order (maintenance vs. renewal); Hansen, Warner & Smith (1980) talk about initiation and goal setting, conflict and confrontation, cohesiveness,

productiveness, and termination; and Beeber (1988) used rebeginning, subgrouping, work phase and termination. (Beeber, [1988] uses the term "rebeginning" to describe a period when the group reverts back to an earlier stage of development. This reverting back process occurs over and over, primarily when there is a change in leadership or membership.) These group development stages may differ in their number of divisions or in their terminology but not in the basic concept of the processes the members experience.

For the purpose of this paper, we have chosen to expand on a single theoretical framework as a way to establish a common understanding of the group development processes occurring within the PDS system. With this goal of establishing a common language and understanding in mind, we have chosen to use only one perspective and one set of group development stages as the foundation for discussing the growth and development of the PDS schools. An adaptation of the stages of group development outlined by Stanford (1977) will provide the foundation from which the evolution of the PDS, it's past conflicts, current achievements and future directions, will be explored. This adaptation was initially created by Putnam and Burke (1992) in reference to classroom learning communities.

The schools involved in this study have been involved in the PDS work long enough that our data supports the use of stage theory for explanations of the development process. At this time we are able to describe five cycles through which PDS schools progressed. The first three cycles initially reported by Nickerson (1990), are labeled as follows: Cycle One: Aggregate; Cycle Two: Small Group Identity; and Cycle Three: The School. Since the identification of the first three cycles, a Fourth Cycle has been identified as Professional Community and a Fifth Cycle as Restructuring and Self Governance. Within each

cycle the development of the PDS group or learning community has five stages. These stages are: beginnings, establishing expectations, identifying and resolving conflict, supporting and expanding the community, and transitions. The fifth stage, transitions, provides a means for explaining how the schools have cycled through the five stages several times in four years. (Please refer to Figure Two for the next few pages.)

Cycle One: Aggregate. As individuals come together that have the opportunity to form a Professional Development School, they are an aggregate. The aggregate is simply a set of individuals. All schools in this report began in this manner. In the first stage of this cycle, beginnings, they acted as individuals asking questions such as: "Who are these people? What is expected of me? How will I be treated?" In the second stage of establishing expectations they asked: "What will I agree to? What will we agree to? What can I get? and How much can I get?" Conflict (stage three) in this cycle forms around questions concerning: whether "higher ups" will allow "us" to do something; whether individuals are "getting money or other concrete resources" that they wanted or interpreted would be made available to them; whether someone is getting something "I" am not getting.

As this cycle moves along into the fourth stage, supporting the building of the community, individuals begin to find potential partners to form partnerships. Teachers begin to identify teacher educators who could be partners in classroom inquiry projects. Teacher educators perceive individual teachers as potential partners. Plans to work together begin to take shape. The transition stage and the movement to the next cycle is initiated by the need for two member partnerships to create small groups in order to coordinate their work so that they can access available resources. For example, studies related to literacy need to work out a way to share human resources to provide reallocated time.

The work of the group during this cycle focuses on the establishment of the initial relationships that may or may not have the potential for long range effectiveness. Transition is initiated by the need to organize and share resources.

Cycle Two: Small Group Work. The beginnings stage of this cycle focuses on creating cohesion within a project small group. Each small group then begins to establish expectations for their group. Across group expectations begin to surface and thus create conflict about fairness, justice, and being treated all the same (versus equity or fairness). The fourth stage, supporting and expanding the community in this cycle is focused on the development of collegial relationships. The fifth stage, transition, is stimulated by the groups needing to organize differently to better access resources and increase efficiency.

Cycle Three: The School. The transition from the prior cycle contributed to individual teachers and some study groups feeling that it is time to create a school wide community. Thus the beginnings stage was about starting a school wide community participation. Questions about who is and who is not involved in establishing the basis for conversations that building wide expectations are needed. Conflict arises from observations of colleagues who appear to participate but do not make changes in their classroom curriculum and instruction. This conflict is followed by conflicts about "What is the school about? and How can we organize?" The fourth stage involves the recruitment of other people to inquiry groups so that all school personnel are involved. The transition period is stimulated by an efficient use of the system and a need for increased time for moving relationships outside of the original "school/university group" (teachers, teacher educators and administrators).

Cycle Four: Professional Community. The focus of this cycle is on what teachers, parents, community, teacher educators, students, administrators need to do in order to bring about success for all pupils. The beginning stage is focused on: 1) needed changes in curricula, instruction, and assessment; 2) new relationships with parents, neighborhood and business community members; and 3) directions for evaluation of school and projects. Establishing expectations, stage two, is focused on working out new understandings about roles, structures, responsibilities, accountability, and relationships. During the third stage we found that conflicts arise from: failures for students to achieve more; and lack of expertise in carrying out new roles, using new structures, and trusting new relationships. Also, the role of business and community in the development of school curriculum and policy seems to be an area of conflict in this cycle. Supporting and expanding the community is focused on whole group ownership of activities and outcomes. While this cycle may last for over two years, the transition is triggered by a need for more efficient and effect organization. In our experience discussions concerning formalizing the relationships (chartering) of PDSs for the purposes of funding has contributed to the community's need for more efficient and effective organization.

Cycle V: Restructuring and Self Governance. To date we have identified two schools that have begun a fifth cycle. While chartering pushed the group along, their need for clarity about roles, expansion of their work into the community and the community into the school are the focus of the beginning stage. New questions about expectations were in the forefront. Restructuring of the school organization and its relationship to the district and university is another set of topics focused in the early parts of this cycle. We are finding that new individuals being included into the school and the

formalization of relationships are forcing the community to enlarge and change their thinking once again. At this time, data from projects has started to influence which projects are continued and where people want to place their efforts. Thus, expectations about support and commitment need to be redefined. A new type of conflict concerning "new roles" as related to changing the traditional roles of the principal emerges in this cycle. It is clear by now that the complexity of the PDS means new responsibilities for all members.

Recommendations

It is our recommendation that large scale institutional deconstruction and construction, (now commonly thought of as "restructuring" in the PDS literature), required in the PDS as defined by the Partnerships studied, must be understood from the perspective of the individual, the group, and the larger context in which the school functions. While the focus of this report is on the individual and the group constructed at the school site, the study of the PDS and individuals' relationships to the neighborhood community, business community, district school system, and college and university are important foci for further study.

FIGURE 2

	CYCLE I AGGREGATE	CYCLE II SMALL GROUP IDENTITY	CYCLE III THE SCHOOL	CYCLE IV PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY	CYCLE V SELF-GOVERNANCE RESTRUCTURING
1. BEGINNINGS	Who are these people? What is expected of me? How will I be treated? What will I agree to?	Creating cohesion within a project group.	Creating a school wide community.	What do we need to do to bring about success for all learners? (Changes in curriculum and assessment instruction; new relationships with parents and community; evaluation of school and projects.)	Clarity about roles, responsibilities, accountability.
2. ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS (NORMS, ROLES, RULES).	What will we agree to? Is someone trying to do something to me?	Creating small group expectations.	Who isn't in? Who is only coming to meetings and not changing instruction?	New understandings for: new roles; new structures; new relationships.	Bring in new individuals. Refine commitments and support.
3. IDENTIFYING AND RESOLVING CONFLICT	What will we get? Are we getting it? Concerned about changes may not be approved by higher ups.	Creating relationships based on shared agendas which cross among study groups.	What are "we about?" How can we organize?	Conflicts arise from: failures for students to achieve more; implementing new roles, structures, relationships.	Restructure roles, responsibilities and structure.
4. BUILDING COMMUNITY	Finding a potential partner in another role.	Getting a colleague.	Recruiting new participating teachers into inquiry groups.	Group ownership. New members.	
5. TRANSITIONS	Need to coordinate.	Team reorganization for resources and efficiency.	Need for organizational structure and use of structure to create time for new relationships and activities.	Need more efficient and effective organization.	

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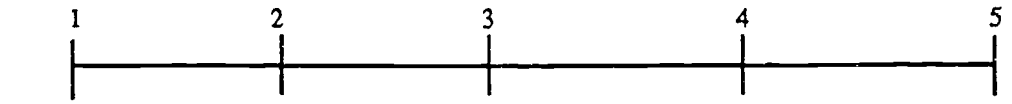
Figure A

Teacher Educator Membership in PDS Continuum



1	2	3	4	5
Resists working in a PDS; fearful of losing total control of research or staff development project; fearful of second class citizenship	Negotiates into PDS to do their own research on their own terms; sells their idea to others	Initially sees the work as that of fixing teachers, teacher education, students, and/or administrators; works collaboratively	Initially has many questions about teaching and learning with a small group; makes small group commitment	Becomes member of PDS school and community educational reform. Research is focused on problems collaboratively identified