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ABSTRACT

This study describes the first-year implementation of a professional development school (PDS) program in an elementary school and reports the extent to which participation in the PDS program influenced teachers' (N=32) perceptions regarding teacher empowerment along four dimensions (mentoring self-efficacy, teaching self-efficacy, professional knowledge, and collegiality) cited in the literature. Data generated by a teacher empowerment questionnaire ("Teacher Empowerment Inventory") were compared to data collected from teachers (N=82) at the other four elementary sites within the PDS program. Chi-square tests revealed significant differences on several questionnaire items. Qualitative data were collected (through interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and examination of archival materials) and examined relative to the major components of the PDS program and the four dimensions of teacher empowerment. The three major components of the PDS model that were examined are: (1) supervision of practice teachers, (2) school improvement planning, and (3) clinical professor training. These data corroborate some previous findings of the questionnaire and suggest explanations for divergent responses. Among the features of the PDS program discussed in this paper are: (1) practice teacher cohorts; (2) training of experienced teachers as clinical professors who instruct, supervise, and evaluate preservice teachers; and (3) university liaisons, who train cooperating teachers and act as members of the supervision/evaluation team for preservice teachers. (IAH)

A Case Study of Teacher Empowerment in a Professional Development School

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Abstract

This study describes the first-year implementation of a Professional Development Schools (PDS) program in an elementary school and reports the extent to which participation in the PDS program influenced teachers' perceptions regarding teacher empowerment along four dimensions cited in the literature. Data generated by a teacher empowerment questionnaire were compared to data collected from teachers at the other four elementary sites within the PDS program. Chi-square tests revealed significant differences on several questionnaire items. Qualitative data were collected and examined relative to the major components of the PDS program and the four dimensions of teacher empowerment. These data corroborate some previous findings of the questionnaire and suggest explanations for divergent responses.

Introduction

In their review of research on Professional Development Schools, Stallings and Kowalski (1990) have emphasized the critical need for longitudinal evaluations and experiments which explore the effectiveness of the new PDS models in undergraduate, graduate, elementary, and secondary preparation and credentialing. Stallings and Kowalski argue that research on this topic must be accomplished quickly so that the effectiveness of the PDS models can be validated before more traditional student teaching programs are eliminated.

As a response to this call for research, a pilot assessment (Morris & Nunnery, 1993) was conducted of teachers in five elementary Professional Development Schools affiliated with Memphis State University's College of Education. The purpose of that assessment was "to determine the extent to which Memphis State University's (MSU) Professional Development School (PDS) model influenced teachers' perceptions of their empowerment along dimensions cited in the literature as meaning teacher empowerment" (Morris & Nunnery, 1993). Four dimensions of teacher empowerment were identified and assessed in the pilot study: (a) mentoring self-efficacy, (b) teaching self-efficacy, (c) professional knowledge, and (d) collegiality.

Instrumentation used in the pilot assessment was a modified form of the *Teacher Empowerment Inventory* (TEI; Butler, Etheridge, James, & Ellis, 1989). Data were collected from 140 of the 190 teachers in the five elementary schools participating in the MSU program. Analyses of the teachers' responses indicated that teachers had experienced empowerment within all four dimensions.

Conclusions were drawn that these increases in empowerment could be traced to the three major components of the MSU Professional Development School model: "(a) supervision of practice teachers, (b) school improvement planning, and (c) clinical professor training" (Morris & Nunnery, 1993).

The present study is an outgrowth of that pilot assessment. The purpose of this study is to provide greater insight into how empowerment unfolded in one of the five schools included in the initial assessment.

Methodology

Setting and Participants

One site within MSU's Professional Development Schools program was selected for extensive qualitative data collection. This school (Friar Tuck Elementary) was selected because the primary investigator for the present study also served as university liaison to the school and therefore had access to a variety of qualitative data resources. Friar Tuck Elementary School is a K-6 school located in a middle-sized city in the Southeastern United States. The school population of approximately 650 children is predominantly African-American from low-income families. Students generally rank below citywide and statewide median scores on achievement tests.

Procedures

In addition to quantitative study of a questionnaire, several qualitative methods were used including participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and examination of archival materials. The principal researcher, in her role as university liaison assigned to the school on a half-time basis, also kept a log of

experiences and impressions throughout the eight-month period of data collection.

Interviews

Nine teachers and one administrator were interviewed individually. In-depth one-hour interviews were scheduled at the Friar Tuck School, either in the teacher's classroom or in an available conference room. Interviewers were college faculty or graduate students familiar with qualitative methodology. Notes were taken, and tape recorders were used to record all interview sessions. Information obtained during each interview included: (a) demographic data on the interviewee, (b) the interviewee's definition of a Professional Development School, and (c) the interviewee's comments on working with practice teachers, the decision-making process at Friar Tuck School, school improvement planning, clinical professor training, and the value of the PDS program for teachers and students. Interviewers attended a debriefing session to share initial impressions and to collaborate on the development of questions to be pursued for further clarification in the focus group sessions.

An interview with the developer of the PDS model at MSU was also conducted so that additional background information on the program could be obtained.

Focus Groups

The entire faculty of 35 participated in three focus groups. Moderators, who had been briefed on procedures and guidelines for the focus groups, obtained information on the faculty's definition of a Professional Development School and their perceptions of working with practice teachers, the decision making process at

their school, school improvement planning, clinical professor training, and the value of the PDS program to teachers and students.

In a debriefing sessions, moderators shared initial impressions gained from the field study. Field notes were transcribed and organized along major program components and other prominent issues that emerged during the interviews and focus group sessions.

Other Data Sources

Other sources of data included the description of the Memphis State University PDS model, the workshop schedule for the year, the school improvement plan completed by the faculty, school improvement reports completed by small groups of faculty, a video-tape presentation made at the first annual end-of-year meeting of PDS sites, and thank-you notes written to the university liaison by children at the school.

Instrumentation

Data collected in the 1993 administration of the *Teacher Empowerment Inventory* (TEI; Butler, Etheridge, James, & Ellis, 1989) were examined. The inventory consists of 38 items, which are phrases that complete the stem: "As a result of my school's participation in the Professional Development Schools program, I . . ." These items, which are grouped into the four empowerment dimensions, solicit response on a five-point Likert-type scale, within which 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree. One item not included in any of the four dimensions is an item concerning decision making in the school. In addition to these inventory items which were analyzed in

the pilot assessment (Morris & Nunnery, 1993), demographic items from the instrument were examined to obtain respondents' sex, ethnic group, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, years teaching in their present school, and cooperating teacher status.

Findings and Interpretation

Analyses

Once field notes from individual interviews, focus groups, and other data sources were transcribed and compiled, information was organized along (a) major program components, (b) empowerment dimensions, and (c) other prominent issues that emerged. Generalizations reported here should not be taken as true of any particular teacher or administrator. Because the findings are offered as broad patterns of perceptions or impressions that emerged from the questionnaires, interviews, and group discussions, individual exceptions to any or all of these findings are expected.

Based on data reported in the *TEI*, frequencies were calculated for each demographic item in order to generate a description of the subjects participating in the study. The percentage of agreement for each inventory item was calculated for Friar Tuck teachers and for the comparison-group teachers from the other four sites; percentage of agreement was based upon the proportion of teachers in each group who responded "Agree" or "Strongly Agree." Chi-square statistics were calculated for each item.

Demographic Characteristics of Questionnaire Respondents

The Friar Tuck sample consisted of 32 teachers, whereas the comparison

group consisted of 82 teachers in the four other PDS elementary schools. The Friar Tuck sample was found to be more ethnically diverse, less highly educated, and less predominantly female, and Friar Tuck School was found to have a smaller proportion of teachers serving as cooperating teachers in the program. Nearly equal proportions of both groups had previous experience as cooperating teachers, but comparison teachers had more years of experience and more tenure at their respective schools. The following demographic characteristics were found:

* 81% (n=26) of Friar Tuck respondents were female; 99% (n=80) of comparison teachers
* 78% (n=25) of Friar Tuck respondents had never served as cooperating teachers, versus 77% (n=63) of comparison teachers
* During the 1992-93 school year, 47% (n=15) served as cooperating teachers, versus 62% (n=51) of comparison teachers
* Among Friar Tuck teachers, 50% (n=16) had attained Bachelor's degrees, 34% (n=11) had attained Master's degrees, and 16% (n=5) had completed 30 or more graduate hours beyond the Master's degree; corresponding percentages for comparison teachers were 27% (n=22) Bachelor's , 46% Master's (n=38), 23% (n=19) Master's +30 hours, and 2% (n=2) Doctorate.
* Among Friar Tuck teachers, 50% (n=16) were Caucasian, 46% (n=14) were African-American, 2% (n=1) were Hispanic, and 2% (n=1) were Native American in ethnicity; corresponding percentages for comparison teachers were 66% (n=53) Caucasian, 29% (n=23) African-American, 3% (n=2) Asian-American, 1% (n=1) Native American, and 1% (n=1) Hispanic.
* Friar Tuck teachers were somewhat less experienced than teachers in the comparison group: 56% of Friar Tuck teachers had eleven or more years of experience, whereas 75% of comparison teachers had eleven or more years of experience
* Friar Tuck teachers had less tenure at their respective school than did comparison teachers: 37% of comparison teachers had eleven or more years of experience at their school versus 19% of Friar Tuck teachers.

Three Major Program Components

One conclusion of the pilot assessment was that the three major components of the MSU model contributed to teachers' empowerment (Morris & Nunnery,

1993). In the present study, clarification and elaboration was sought concerning the impact of the three components on teachers' experiences at Friar Tuck.

Supervision of Practice Teachers

This component of the PDS model was designed to cluster as many as 10 to 20 practice teachers per semester in each PDS school. As specified in the model, each school's faculty and staff assume the lead role in the supervision and evaluation of practice teachers and serve as equal partners with higher education faculty in the teacher education process. An MSU professor is designated as university liaison to each school and works at the school on a half-time basis to serve as a resource person and train cooperating teachers in the process of evaluation, observation, reflective mentoring, and clinical supervision.

During the 1992-93 academic year, 20 practice teachers were assigned to Friar Tuck. Because Friar Tuck was not one of the regular clinical sites of the university, the school had never previously been assigned student teachers. The university liaison provided training to the Friar Tuck cooperating teachers during after-school workshops as well as through on-the-job modeling. As a member of the supervision/evaluation team for the practice teachers, the university liaison was also responsible for completing snap-shot evaluations of each practice teacher prior to progress report conferences.

Other duties of the university liaison related to the practice teaching component included establishing continuity between preservice and inservice staff development programs, and assisting in the development of collegial openness so that preservice and inservice teachers could more easily seek professional assistance

and/or support.

Respondents' statements concerning their experiences with the "Supervision of Practice Teachers" program component are reflected in the "Mentoring Self-Efficacy" section of this report.

School Improvement Planning

As outlined in the MSU Professional Development Schools model, each school faculty is required to develop a school improvement plan based on the following principles:

1. All children can learn.
2. Student success is the goal of all school activity.
3. Students need to be challenged and need to learn to pursue difficult tasks and persist with the tasks at which they are unsuccessful.
4. Learning is an active process.
5. Parental involvement is an essential element in effective schools.
6. Teachers are leaders, and principals are leaders of leaders.
7. The business of the school district and the state is to assure that each school unit operates under optimal conditions and produces optimal results.
8. Staff success results from motivated and competent people working in an environment that is committed to their success, continuing growth, and development.
9. Instruction will be developmentally appropriate and educationally sound (Chance, 1992).

Part of the university liaison's responsibility is to assist the faculty in the development and implementation of this school improvement plan.

The Friar Tuck school improvement plan, designed to improve teaching and learning in the school, was developed primarily during after-school workshop sessions using a model designed by Chance and Rakes (1992). This plan was organized around an understanding of the goals of five constituencies: Friar Tuck students, Friar Tuck faculty, Friar Tuck school administrators, central

administrators, and Friar Tuck parents and community members. Faculty and staff worked together in setting priorities for training and implementation. The school improvement plan was the driving force for inservice workshops that were implemented at Friar Tuck during the academic year. Included in the action plans were literature reviews in selected areas, grant writing activities, visits to classrooms in other schools, and participation and facilitation at workshops. Under the plan, each grade level committee was asked to develop a written school improvement report to be presented at an end-of-year meeting; suggested topics for the reports were workshop sessions, new classroom strategies, and areas of interests for future school improvement plans. Specifically, the Friar Tuck school improvement plan called for focus on developmentally appropriate practice, nongraded primary, whole language learning, cooperative learning, building self-esteem, and planning field trips.

Respondents' statements concerning their experiences with the "School Improvement Plan" program component are reflected in the "Teacher Self-Efficacy" and "Collegiality" sections of this report.

Clinical Professor Training

One criterion for selection as an MSU Professional Development School is that the faculty choose to be trained for their new roles as clinical professors. Faculty and staff who complete the 51 hours of training receive clinical professor certificates and became "adjuncts of choice" in the College of Education at Memphis State University. They are also eligible to receive three hours of graduate credit if all requirements are met.

The clinical professor training at Friar Tuck was driven by the needs identified in the school improvement plan. Professionals with expertise in the identified areas conducted workshops at the school site. Most presenters were professors from the College of Education at Memphis State University. Topics included: supervision, mentoring, and evaluation of student teachers; parental involvement; reading in the elementary school; special needs children; grant writing; cooperative learning; whole language learning; test anxiety of students, teachers, and parents; effective schools for children at-risk; and developmentally appropriate practice.

Respondents' statements concerning their experiences with the "Clinical Professor Training" program component are reflected in the "Professional Knowledge" and "Teaching Self-Efficacy" sections of this report.

Four Dimensions of Empowerment

Data analyses indicate that teachers at Friar Tuck and comparison schools felt that their participation in the PDS program enhanced their empowerment along the dimensions of mentoring self-efficacy, teaching self-efficacy, collegiality, and professional knowledge. Specific related findings are discussed along each dimension.

Mentoring Self-Efficacy

Supervision of practice teachers is a program component that may have contributed to the teachers' enhanced empowerment along the mentoring self-efficacy dimension. In their responses to the *Teacher Empowerment Inventory*, 74% of Friar Tuck teachers, as compared to 79% of comparison teachers, indicated

that they were more sensitive to the problems and stress experienced by practice teachers. On the remaining items along this dimension, less than 70% of Friar Tuck teachers indicated enhanced empowerment. Significant differences were observed on two of the mentoring self-efficacy items between Friar Tuck respondents and comparison respondents. Fifty-three percent of Friar Tuck teachers indicated that they were better able to assist practice teachers, versus 72% of comparison teachers. Fifty percent of Friar Tuck teachers indicated they had increased interest in helping practice teachers, versus 72% of comparison teachers.

These findings may be related to a number of factors. When compared with the other respondent schools, Friar Tuck had fewer teachers to serve as cooperating teachers, and their teachers had less teaching experience and less tenure at their school. This was also the first year that Friar Tuck had student teachers, while each of the comparison schools had been clinical sites with large numbers of practice teachers for eight to ten years prior to the establishment of the PDS program. There may also have been differences in the amount of workshop training provided at Friar Tuck versus the comparison schools on the topic of supervision and evaluation of practice teaching.

The qualitative data indicate that teachers at Friar Tuck generally felt very positive about the introduction of practice teachers from the university into their school and classrooms. Teachers considered practice teaching in Friar Tuck classrooms to be exposure to the "real life of teaching," not the kind of experience the practice teachers might receive in a laboratory or suburban school. The teachers believed that as a result of their Friar Tuck experiences with at-risk children, new

teachers would be less likely to abandon teaching careers and would be better prepared to teach in any situation. Teachers stressed that new teachers need to be equipped to work in classrooms with children from diverse backgrounds, in schools with little parental support, and in areas where there are many drug-related problems. Faculty were also confident that practice teachers placed in Friar Tuck classrooms would discover that it is a "good school with good teachers who care about children."

Cooperating teachers were pleased that they had direct input into the evaluation process for practice teachers. One teacher said:

> Before, it was more hands-off and the professor was the total evaluator. It is impossible for a professor to be able to spend enough time to know whether the student can handle all types of situations. But the teacher is there always to offer advice and be there for them.

Initially, many cooperating teachers felt uncomfortable taking the lead in the evaluation conferences, but by the end of the period of this study all faculty more readily accepted that responsibility.

Cooperating teachers reported that practice teachers' presence in the classrooms enabled the children to be exposed to other teachers, other adults, and "something they were unaccustomed to," and that the students adapted very well to this change. Teachers reported that their work with practice teachers was leading them to be better supervisors and teachers. They valued the opportunity to work with someone over an extended period of time and to grow more comfortable with that coworker. Additionally, cooperating teachers valued the opportunity to discuss information received in the PDS inservice workshops with the preservice teachers.

The responses that follow are representative of the sentiments of many of the cooperating teachers regarding the supervision of practice teachers:

Table 1

Mentoring Self-Efficacy: Item Percentage Agreement by School

Item	Friar Tuck	Comparison	X^2
Stem: As a result of my school's participation in the PDS program, I . . .			
am a better role model for practice teachers.	69	73	0.22
am better able to assist practice teachers.	53	72	3.67*
have increased interest in helping practice teachers.	50	75	6.99*
have more confidence in my ability to supervise and evaluate practice teachers.	56	72	2.59
am more sensitive to the problems and stress experienced by practice teachers.	74	79	0.24
can better coach others in skill development.	56	66	0.87
recognize the need to improve my skills in working with practice teachers.	63	64	0.02

* $p < .05$.
Friar Tuck $n = 32$. Comparison $n = 82$.

You have two teachers in the classroom instead of one. With my last practice teacher, the two of us working together were a good team. I would have time to do the things I needed to do because I trusted him to do what he was supposed to do. When you have a good practice teacher, it can really enhance your teaching.

I learned new things. I've been out of school for 5 years now and it's long enough that you get in a rut and forget. I enjoyed mine.

I think we all learned no matter how long you've taught, because a first year teacher can come in with new ideas and things even if you have 20 years experience, you can still learn a lot. I did learn a lot. And just the camaraderie of having someone and this was something exciting for her. It felt good to tell someone that each day has a new beginning, calm down, things will be better tomorrow and just talk to them and help them along.

Teachers reported that for the first time their students were talking about attending the university. The teachers attributed this new attitude to the presence of university personnel and practice teachers in their school. Students from one fifth grade classroom asked their teacher to deliver letters to the university liaison expressing their appreciation for having practice teachers and university personnel in their school. The following are excerpts from those letters:

You are the greatest inspector ever *(university liaison)*!

I thank you for coming in our classroom. And I really liked the student teachers, they were teaching us really good things and thank you for letting them come in our class.

They gave us fun things to do like word search and more to do and Friday Letter. That was cool.

I like Mrs. Heather because she was nice, smart intelligent. And gave us crossword puzzles and other activities. I like Mr. Denny because he told us about himself when he was in the Navy. And he gave us good Friday letter.

Thank you for letting Mr. Denny come stay in our classroom. He taught us what we need to know to survive in the world. We really do appreciate that you let him come to our room. Please let him come and visit before school is out.

Teachers reported that accommodating 14 practice teachers at the beginning of the academic year was difficult for a school with no previous practice-teacher experience; however, teachers reported that the second term, during which six practice teachers were placed at Friar Tuck, "went much smoother." In the second term, staff members were able to volunteer to be cooperating teachers rather than being selected and assigned by the principal.

Teachers expressed a number of concerns regarding the supervision of practice teachers: (a) selection of cooperating teachers needs to be made prior to the beginning of the term; (b) cooperating teachers need more training in the supervision of practice teachers; (c) some practice teachers need greater classroom management skills; (d) practice teachers should only be assigned for ten-week placement at the beginning of the academic year; (e) practice teachers should communicate with cooperating teachers regarding problems they are experiencing in the classroom; (f) cooperating teachers have concern that their students will perform poorly on standardized evaluations as a result of low performance by practice teachers; and (g) cooperating teachers must spend too much time outside school hours teaching practice teachers who have not had adequate clinical experiences in their methods coursework.

Out of the fourteen practice teachers for the first semester, twelve of the students were undergraduates and two were MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) students. Generally, the undergraduate students appeared to be much better prepared for the practice teaching experience than the graduate students, both in content and expectations for the work load of teachers. The experience of one

cooperating teacher working with a MAT student is an example of the commitment and empowerment experienced by Friar Tuck faculty:

> I literally taught him what he needed to know but I didn't get paid a salary for teaching him . . . I was spending two hours a day. Sometimes we walked out at 5:00 or 5:30p.m. *(school dismissal time was 2:30 p.m.)*, two or three times a week because he had so many questions and he couldn't plan for next week because he didn't know how to relate what the children were doing to the overall plan for the coming week... He was an intelligent man and he tried very hard.

This is but one example of cooperating teachers' assumption of the role of mentor-teachers and equal partners with their university counterparts in the teacher education process.

Teaching Self-Efficacy

Enhanced empowerment along the teaching self-efficacy dimension may have been influenced by the school improvement planning and clinical professor training components of the program. More that 70% of Friar Tuck teachers reported enhanced empowerment on three of the five items of this particular dimension. Seventy-nine percent of Friar Tuck teachers, versus 78% of comparison teachers, indicated they were more aware of the influence they could have in improving teaching and learning, and 72%, versus 68% of comparison teachers, felt an increased sense of professionalism. Eighty-one percent of Friar Tuck teachers, versus 73% of comparison teachers, indicated they had increased self-confidence as professional role models. There were no significant differences observed between Friar Tuck teachers and comparison teachers on items within the teaching self-efficacy dimension of empowerment.

During the focus groups and individual interviews, teachers at Friar Tuck

reported that the major benefits of the school improvement planning process were (a) knowledge gained about different teaching strategies and (b) improved communication among faculty across grade levels. Some teaching strategies which were implemented as a result of the plan, i.e., cooperative learning and whole language, received such support from teachers that the school planned to continue to implement them in the upcoming academic year. The following comments of teachers emphasize the benefits noted:

> Just to do a school improvement plan would make you have to communicate. If you hadn't been communicating before, you would communicate. It will open the door, even if it starts out very slowly.

> Has the school improvement plan itself helped me to integrate better into the school system? It has made me more aware of all the faculty members and with the community. It lets me know what they are doing in the classroom, what's happening in the other classrooms. I know that next door cooperative learning is taking place and I know what is happening with the computer system, because everybody keeps in contact and lets me know what skills my students need to be working on. So I think it has helped. By being a new teacher, it has been a little friendlier and forces people not to hide all of the good ideas they have.

> Well, as we were discussing and working on the school improvement plan, and we might talk about whole language for example, or cooperative learning and we might discuss how someone had tried that on a particular grade level and what did work and what didn't work. And when you go back and try it with your grade level, certain parts might work with one of those age groups but not with another. So it was just different things like that came out in the work we did in inservice. I think there was more consensus within the faculty as to what was needed from grade level to grade level after that.

Teachers at Friar Tuck would have preferred that the school improvement plan had been completed earlier in the school year, perhaps in two or three full-day workshops. During the year of this study, the planning process at Friar Tuck was extended over a period of months and took place during two-hour, after-school

inservice meetings. Teachers also cited obstacles to the implementation of the school improvement plan; these included shortage of money, lack of parental involvement, and large class size.

Clinical professor training was driven by the goals, objectives, and activities

Table 2

Teaching Self-Efficacy: Item Percentage Agreement by School

Item	Friar Tuck	Comparison	X^2
Stem: As a result of my school's participation in the PDS program, I . . .			
am more aware of the influence I can have in improving teaching and learning.	79	78	0.00
have more influence in contributing to the success of others.	66	56	0.98
am more confident about my ability to work as an equal partner with university personnel in preparing new teachers.	66	74	0.88
have increased my sense of professionalism.	72	68	0.14
have increased confidence as a professional role model.	81	73	0.87

* $p < .05$.
Friar Tuck $n = 32$. Comparison $n = 82$.

identified in the school improvement plan. Teachers found some sessions more beneficial than others. The sessions mentioned most often as beneficial were cooperative learning and whole language. Teachers seemed especially pleased that they had input on selection of the topics for the workshop sessions and that the university liaison was able to quickly secure "resource people" on the topics. By working with the university, teachers felt that more resources were available to meet their needs than ever before. They were also pleased to have workshop sessions at their school site rather than having to travel across the city, and to have sessions with a smaller group of professionals (their faculty only) as compared to other system-wide inservice meetings with 200 or more professionals.

The amount of time spent in clinical professor training emerged as a major concern of teachers. They recommended that much less time should be spent in the process during the second year of the program. Many reported that two hours after school on almost a weekly basis made for a long, tiring day and often an ineffective session because of fatigue.

Professional Knowledge

Clinical professor training was the MSU program component designed to effect teacher empowerment along the professional knowledge dimension. More than 70% of Friar Tuck teachers felt enhanced empowerment along two of the six items included in this dimension. Seventy-five percent of teachers in both groups indicated that they were more aware of individual styles of teaching. Seventy-four percent of Friar Tuck teachers, versus 51% of comparison teachers, felt increased confidence in their ability to help or teach students who were at-risk for school

failure. Significant differences were observed between Friar Tuck and comparison schools on this item, in favor of Friar Tuck. This difference may be related to the fact that Friar Tuck has a large at-risk student population and thus more clinical professor training sessions may have focused on teaching and learning strategies to use with at-risk children. Qualitative findings regarding clinical professor training

Table 3

Professional Knowledge: Item Percentage Agreement by School

Item	Friar Tuck	Comparison	X^2
Stem: As a result of my school's participation in the PDS program, I . . .			
am more knowledgeable about good and poor teaching practices.	69	73	0.22
am more confident about my ability to help or teach students who are at risk of school failure.	74	51	4.86*
have new insights into personality factors and their influences on teaching.	62	68	0.37
have clarified my own beliefs about teaching.	56	62	0.29
have used more cooperative problem-solving strategies.	69	65	0.11
am more aware of individual styles of teaching.	75	75	0.00

* $p < .05$.
Friar Tuck $n = 32$. Comparison $n = 82$.

which are discussed within the teaching self-efficacy section of this report are also applicable along the professional knowledge dimension of teacher empowerment.

Collegiality

Perceived enhancement along the collegiality dimension may be linked to the school improvement planning component of the PDS program. More than 69% of Friar Tuck teachers reported enhanced empowerment along each of the four

Table 4

Collegiality: Item Percentage Agreement by School

Item	Friar Tuck	Comparison	X^2
Stem: As a result of my school's participation in the PDS program, I . . .			
talk more with other teachers.	69	62	0.42
am more willing to assist other teachers who may be experiencing problems.	72	72	0.00
participate in more cooperative planning with other teachers.	75	67	0.68
am more willing to share and work with peers to improve teaching and learning at my school.	78	74	0.23

* $p < .05$.
Friar Tuck $n = 32$. Comparison $n = 82$.

subscales included in the collegiality dimension. Sixty-nine percent of Friar Tuck teachers, versus 62% of comparison teachers, felt that as a result of their involvement in the PDS program, they talked more with other teachers and 72% of teachers in both groups indicated they were more willing to assist teachers experiencing problems. Seventy-five percent of Friar Tuck teachers, versus 67% of comparison teachers, indicated that they participated in a greater amount of cooperative planning with other teachers, and 78%, versus 74% of comparison teachers, felt that they are more willing to share and work with peers to improve teaching and learning at their schools. There were no significant differences observed between Friar Tuck teachers and comparison teachers on items within this dimension.

Through the process of developing a comprehensive program for their school, teachers at Friar Tuck experienced many opportunities to share their opinions and ideas regarding goals, objectives, and activities required to ensure that their school was a learning community for children, teachers, parents, and administrators. Teachers shared their ideas in written and oral forms with their peers at their specific grade level, across grade levels, and with support teachers and administrators. Qualitative findings related to school improvement planning which are discussed under the teaching self-efficacy section are also relevant to enhanced empowerment along the collegiality dimension.

Other Issues Addressed in Responses

Decision Making

Compared to responses on other items, teachers at Friar Tuck (47%) and

comparison schools (46%) were less likely to report that they had participated more in school-wide decision making as a result of participation in the PDS program. This perception may be related to at least two factors. First, while school faculties voted to participate in the PDS program, many of the decisions regarding how the program would be implemented during the pilot year were made without input from the teachers, e.g., number of hours for clinical professor training and the model used for the school improvement planning process. Teachers probably did not begin to feel the impact of these decisions until the implementation phase of the program. Secondly, because of the existence of guidelines mandated by the state and the local school board, teachers believed that their hands were often tied in making desired curriculum changes discussed in school improvement planning.

Qualitative findings show that grade chairpersons and teachers with long-term tenure at Friar Tuck School tended to feel that the decision-making process at the school had not changed a great deal, while newcomers felt that teachers were more active in the decision-making process. For example, a grade chairman said:

> Before we were chosen (as a PDS) the teachers always had a lot of input in the decision-making process. Each grade has a grade chairman and the grade chairman is called in for any major decision-making process, so the teachers do have input and the teachers on that grade level they tell the grade chairman what their ideas are as well. I don't know that there's been a big change, as the teachers had a good bit of input to begin with.

A teacher with much less tenure at Friar Tuck indicated that although there was a democratic decision-making policy in place at the school, teachers felt more comfortable in discussing different approaches to problems within the PDS program. In addition, teachers reported that the PDS program had facilitated the sharing of

ideas not only within grade levels but also across grade levels.

The faculty had voted unanimously the previous spring to become a PDS school. At that time, they were told that the school would have practice teachers and inservice on-site workshops led by MSU faculty. However, teachers reported that at the time of their vote, they were unclear about the time commitment required for the first year and the school's long-term commitment to the program.

Friar Tuck faculty agreed that for the most part, the principal had made decisions regarding the placement of practice teachers during the first term of the program. Teachers were asked to volunteer to be cooperating teachers for the second term. Relative to decisions made about the supervision and evaluation of practice teachers, one teacher commented that "Instead of MSU doing all of it, the cooperating teachers are given more authority to work with the student teachers and evaluate them."

Faculty members at Friar Tuck were actively involved in developing the school improvement plan and selecting topics for the inservice workshops. The responses found below are typical of teachers' remarks relative to their input in decision making and also communicate the consequences or effects of their involvement or non-involvement in the process:

> I think the input has been during the inservice meetings when ... [the university liaison] would ask what we needed and she would always take whatever we'd done that day, compile it, and bring it back so we could work on it. We were constantly given opportunity to put input into how that plan progressed during the year.
>
> We did have input into the school improvement plan, but we were not part of the decision making on any other part of it, as far as whether we would actually be in it or not, or we knew nothing about the hours or years

> involved. We had no part in the decision-making of any of that. I think had we had some decision-making in that, it would have been less stressful, there would have been a lot more cooperation from the very beginning, and I think there would have been a sense of overall accomplishment at the end. Any time you're part of a decision-making group, you get a sense of owning whatever you're doing. We had no ownership at all, until we literally began to be involved with this school improvement plan. And it took a while I think because we were not in on all of it from the beginning.

Inquiry and Research

At Friar Tuck School, each grade level committee selected an area from the school improvement plan for implementation in the second semester of the school year. Teachers selected activities in the following areas: developmentally appropriate practice, nongraded primary, field trips, whole language, cooperative learning, and building self-esteem. The committees' school improvement reports indicated that during the academic year they had completed preliminary literature searches, developed grant proposals, attended conferences and visited classrooms in other schools in the city. When adequate literature searches were not available in their own professional libraries, the university liaison brought resources from the university and conducted ERIC searches to provide the needed references.

While no formal research projects were conducted during Friar Tuck's first year of participation in the program, teachers presented their accomplishments in both written in oral presentations at the final inservice meeting for the year. One grade level committee noted the following changes as a result of implementation of cooperative learning groups in their classrooms:

1. More students were actively involved in the learning process.
2. Students enjoyed learning from each other.
3. Students improved their social skills.
4. There were stronger problem solving skills
5. Student learned more about each other.

6. Students' interests increased in many subject areas.
7. There were stronger verbal skills.
8. There was an improved classroom environment.
9. Discipline problems decreased.
10. Grades improved in many areas.
11. There were more positive attitudes about learning.
12. Students were excited and turned on to learning and interacting with each other.
13. Students gained more confidence in themselves.
14. Students seemed glad to help each other learn.

Definition of Professional Development Schools

At the end of the study period, the faculty at Friar Tuck did not appear to have reached a consensus definition of a PDS school as conceived by the developer of the MSU model. Definitions ranged from "a school with student teachers" to "a school in which weekly inservice meetings are conducted by the university for the school staff." However, one of the interviewees clearly communicated the intended definition and purpose as noted below:

> Our involvement in the PDS program has been good for us. We can give MSU students a lot of experience and problems they will encounter. The university has done a lot for us by keeping us updated, offering expert advice and grant writing assistance.

The faculty communicated that they now had a better relationship with the university as a result of their PDS status and that they were more professional as a result of the school-university relationship.

Time Commitment

Prior to the faculty's vote on becoming a PDS school, MSU's Director of the Office of Teacher Education informed the superintendent of schools and the school principal of the time commitment for faculty involved in PDS participation. However, at the beginning of the academic year, there appeared to be some

confusion among the faculty regarding the time commitment required for the clinical professor training component of the PDS program. This issue emerged as a major concern of the faculty during the individual interviews and focus group sessions. Although all teachers attended the workshop sessions on a regular basis, some teachers exhibited their dissatisfaction by conducting loud second conversations during inservice meetings. The university liaison was made aware that some of the coldness and rudeness experienced during the first term was due to some of the teachers' anxiety associated with the amount of time spent in after-school, clinical professor training--a commitment they had not fully understood when they voted to become a Professional Development School.

However, by January, the beginning of the second term of the program, the distracting behavior had subsided. This change in behavior appeared to be associated with a developing rapport with and trust in the university liaison. At the first meeting of the second term, the university liaison made a statement to the teachers which referenced a local newspaper article: "The longer I live here, the more I understand what it takes for you to get up to come to teach every morning." The teachers applauded. This appeared to be one of the events marking the turning point toward a more positive climate for inservice meetings. The developing trust/rapport was reflected in a statement made by one of the teachers:

> You treat us as peers. There are some university people who feel that they are up there and we are down here. They *(university professors)* need us for their work. We don't need them.

The concern regarding the time commitment, evident in the individual interviews and focus group sessions, was reinforced in a light-hearted skit performed by faculty

members at the first annual end-of-year conference of Professional Development Schools at MSU.

College of Education's Responsiveness to Evolving Needs of the Program

The College of Education responded expeditiously to the program's evolving needs that were communicated during monthly meetings with the university liaisons, the Director of Teacher Education, and the Coordinator of Field Experiences. The College's pattern of rapid response certainly contributed to creating an atmosphere within which teacher empowerment could emerge. Several examples follow that demonstrate immediate action taken by the College of Education.

Initially, university liaisons were assigned one-quarter time for their work with a PDS. Within the first month of implementation, it became clear that a minimum of half-time assignment was needed for a university liaison to effectively carry out the program. Based on input from the liaisons, the assignment change was made immediately and implemented at the beginning of the next term.

In developing their school improvement plans, teachers expressed a desire to visit other PDS sites which modeled some of the teaching strategies proposed for their own classrooms. The Director of Teacher Education worked with the school systems to develop a visitation program (half-day) whereby a cooperating teacher could leave the classroom in the hands of the full-time practice teacher and observe another school. Many teachers also visited non-PDS sites as well.

Teachers at the PDS sites communicated an interest in learning more about the kinds of activities implemented at other PDS schools. As a result, faculty and

administrators from the six participating schools were invited to participate in a full-day, year-end PDS conference. PDS faculty gave input on suggested dates and times and topics to explore at the session. Staff members from each school were invited to conduct workshop sessions and to develop a 15-minute presentation that communicated their year of work. A successful year-end conference was conducted on June 10, 1993, with excellent participation from the five elementary schools and the middle school involved in the program.

Although the university liaisons met formally on a monthly basis and talked informally on a regular basis, liaisons agreed that they knew very little about schools other than their own. To remedy this, it was decided that in year two the monthly meetings would be held on a rotation basis at the different PDS sites and would include a tour of the host school and some time spent with classroom teachers and administrators. The goal of this rotation was to exchange resources, talents, and ideas benefitting the entire PDS program.

PDS teachers suggested changes in the practice teacher evaluation form and practice teacher placements for the first semester of each year. Their suggestions were incorporated into year two implementation plans. By the end of the year of this study, cooperating teachers not only had assumed the lead role in the supervision and evaluation of practice teachers but also had begun to teach courses at the university and serve as guest lecturers in methods courses. These activities were evidence of the teachers' enhanced empowerment.

Plans for Year Two

At the time individual interviews and focus groups were conducted, plans

had not been made regarding implementation of the PDS program for year two and beyond. During the data collection sessions, teachers often asked MSU faculty and staff about the program's future plans. The Director of Teacher Education had indicated to MSU faculty that there was no master plan after year one, other than that each school would continue to have practice teachers and to implement its school improvement plan. Therefore, it was the task of each school's faculty to make implementation plans for year two. At the final inservice meeting of the school year, Friar Tuck teachers, together with their university liaison, made plans that include the following elements.

Schedule of professional development activities. Activities would be scheduled during support periods as well as after school. Some faculty members expressed an interest in concentrated weekend courses (Friday evening through Saturday) for credit which would be offered by MSU. Faculty participation in PDS sessions would be voluntary during the 1993-94 academic year. When sessions were scheduled on topics requested, faculty members would sign up in advance so that the required number of resources would be available for each person in attendance.

Suggested topics for year two. Teachers suggested workshops that would be of interest to the total faculty. These workshops would be conducted periodically, in after-school sessions. Requested topics included: student teaching supervision; strategies for teaching conflict resolution; improving students' achievement tests scores; grant writing; and action-research methodology. Teachers also expressed a desire to integrate the self-study process with PDS activities. Grade level committees decided to continue working on topics begun during the pilot year. It was agreed

that committee meetings would be scheduled at support times during regular school hours. Teachers would pursue research, experimentation, and grant writing related to: developmentally appropriate practice (kindergarten); nongraded primary (first grade); field trips (second grade and support teachers); whole language (third grade); cooperative learning (fourth and sixth grades); and building self-esteem. All of these topics emerged from goals, objectives, and activities included in the school improvement plan.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Faculty from both Friar Tuck and the comparison schools believed that their participation in the PDS program enhanced their empowerment the most along the collegiality dimension and the least in the area of decision making. Collegiality is integral to the creation of a school climate that is ripe for reform. Program teachers indicated that they talked more with one another, were more willing to assist other teachers, participated more in cooperative planning, and were more willing to share and work with peers to improve teaching and learning in their school.

In order for meaningful school reform and teacher empowerment to emerge in a timely fashion, it may be important for K-12 practitioners to be involved in the initial planning of reform. Teachers should clearly understand the theory and concepts on which an initiative is built as well as the time and resource commitments which will be required. Schools and universities must work together to devise creative and feasible ways to set aside the time required for reform to flourish--time for collaboration and time to build trust and rapport. Teachers may feel resentful and uncooperative when they perceive that the majority of the time is

found in uncompensated, after-school hours, rather than during the work day.

K-12 practitioners seemed pleased to be a part of the teacher education process by becoming mentor-teachers for practice teachers. They felt that they had something special to offer practice teachers and welcomed the stimulation of new ideas that can come from new inductees into the profession.

Two components of the MSU model may be especially critical to facilitating teachers' early commitment and ownership of the program, namely, school improvement planning and supervision of practice teachers. Beginning work on the school improvement plan early in the process appears to help teachers focus more on the teaching and learning needs of the school from the beginning of the reform effort. For schools which have not been clinical sites prior to being a PDS school, early training in practice teacher supervision, evaluation, coaching, and reflective mentoring may enable the cooperating teachers to gain confidence in their role as mentor-teachers.

As noted by Nystrand (1991), the rationale for establishing Professional Development Schools rests on the premise that university and school personnel have shared interests in the improvement of both schools and teacher education. Too often, school reform has been initiated from the point of view that university professors are the experts and K-12 practitioners are the recipients of their expertise. The PDS concept communicates that indeed university personnel do have expertise to offer in improving teaching and learning in schools and K-12 practitioners have expertise that enables the university to improve its teacher preparation program as well. One of the staff members at Friar Tuck communicated this sentiment well

when asked about the benefits of the first year of this school-university collaborative: "We've been helped and we think we have helped."

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