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ABSTRACT

During the 1995-96 academic year, faculty and administrators in the College of Education at Illinois State University, (Normal, IL) and teachers and administrators from a local school district established a Professional Development School (PDS). A group of 32 of the university's elementary education majors were placed at school sites in the local district to spend their entire last year of education and practice. Students taught on-site within the schools and participated in the day-to-day activities of the classroom under the direction of selected mentor teachers. Researchers studied a number of different aspects of this PDS during the year. Data from interviews with participating university faculty indicated that they were satisfied with the students and the program, and they regarded the program highly, though several critical issues needed to be addressed if the program was to continue and prosper. These issues included the distance and traveling time between the university and the participating district; ways to improve and increase the amount of communication between university faculty, students, and district mentors; the student and faculty workload and ways this workload might be more equitably distributed and scheduled; and ways of providing similar experiences to other on-campus students. An appendix contains the faculty interview questions. Contains 37 references. (SM)

University Faculty Perspectives on the First Year of a Professional Development School Program

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Abstract

The Professional Development School (PDS) model advocates that students pursuing a career in teaching would benefit from in-school based experiences conducted by both university faculty and district mentors teachers -- experiences designed to expose the student to what the teaching life is really all about. University faculty would benefit from direct and ongoing interactions with real teachers and students, while the practicing teachers could learn about and experiment with the latest theories and methods. During the 1995-1996 academic year faculty and administrators in the College of Education at Illinois State University (Normal, IL), and teachers and administrators from the Community Consolidated School District #21 (Wheeling, IL), establish a PDS. Thirty-two of ISU's elementary education majors were placed at school sites in District #21 to spend their entire last year of education and practice. During this year those students received their final courses taught on-site in the district by selected ISU faculty. These students also participated in the day-to-day activities of the classroom under the direction of selected mentor teachers. A number of different aspects of this new professional development school were studied throughout the year. This report presents results gathered from interviews of participating university faculty. University faculty report satisfaction with the students and the program although, if the effort is to continue and prosper in future years, several critical issues must be addressed. These issues include: the distance and traveling time between the university and the participating district; ways to improve and increase the amount of communication between university faculty, students, and district mentors; the student and faculty workload, and ways this load might be more equitably distributed and scheduled; and ways of providing similar experiences to other on-campus students.

University Faculty Perspectives on the First Year of a Professional Development School Program

In 1983 a group of 17 deans from prominent colleges of education met to discuss alternative ways to enhance the programs at their institutions. They came to be known as the Holmes Group, and in 1986 they produced Tomorrow's Teachers. Among the recommendations of Holmes Group was a new kind of teacher training facility for which they coined the name Professional Development School (PDS). A PDS, according to the Holmes Group, would provide superior opportunities for teachers and administrators to influence the development of their profession, and for university faculty to increase the professional relevance of their work, through:

1. Mutual deliberation on problems with student learning and their possible solutions;
2. Shared teaching in the university and schools;
3. Collaborative research on the problems of educational practice; and
4. Cooperative supervision of prospective teachers and administrators (Holmes Group, 1986).

What, then, does an actual working professional development school look like? The Holmes Group stated that they did not have a specific blueprint and that they did not expect any two universities to develop identical programs (Holmes Group, 1986). However, the Holmes Group expressed dismay because their concept of a PDS had attracted many cheap copies and all kinds of schools were calling themselves a PDS when, in fact, they shared none of the essential elements defined by the Holmes Group. Often these professional development schools were nothing more than a very traditional student teaching model with perhaps one or two different little twists (Holmes Group, 1995).

In their model the Holmes Group (1986) set forth five general goals. Three of these goals address aspects of their concept central to the establishment of a PDS:

1. To recognize differences in teachers' knowledge, skill, and commitment in their education, certification and work.
2. To connect our own institutions to schools.
3. To make schools better places for teachers to work and to learn.

The Holmes Group suggests that a PDS should be the analogue of the medical education's teaching hospital, an institution that brings practicing teachers and administrators together with university faculty to improve teaching and learning. In this way teachers and administrators can influence the development of the profession and university faculty can develop the professional relevance of their work by:

1. Mutually discussing the problems and possible solutions involved with student learning;

2. Sharing teaching in the schools and universities;
3. Collaborating on educational research; and
4. Cooperating in the supervision of prospective teachers and administrators.

In Tomorrow's Schools the Holmes Group (1990) reiterated their belief that professional development schools are an essential means to effective educational reform. The group offered six principles for the development of a PDS:

1. Teaching and learning for understanding.
2. Creating a learning community.
3. Teaching and learning for understanding for everybody's children.
4. Continuing learning by teachers, teacher educators, and administrators.
5. Thoughtful long-term inquiry into teaching and learning.
6. Inventing a new institution.

The concept of a PDS will only succeed if there is true reciprocity between the school and the university educators. That process of reciprocity can be initiated by any interested party: an individual school, a school district, a university or another party. The Holmes Group stressed the fact that a PDS should not simply formalize existing arrangements wherein schools regularly accept student teachers, take part in university research projects, and serve as instructional testing sites. A PDS is supposed to be a learning community composed of a both the university and the school, committed to a long-term relationship. They propose that the coalition surrounding a PDS be composed of business policymakers, community organizations, and social service agencies.

In Tomorrow's Schools of Education, the group states that while a PDS is analogous to teaching hospitals and experimental stations in agriculture, it is meant to do more than these examples -- it is meant to be about continuous innovation. Although no two PDS implementations should look exactly alike, they should possess certain common characteristics, among which is a dynamism that is constantly evolving. The PDS is central, according to the Holmes Group, to the three basic commitments of tomorrow's schools of education:

1. Professional learning in the context of sound practice;
2. Improvement-oriented inquiry; and
3. Educational standard-setting.

The ISU-District #21 Professional Development School Project

The College of Education at Illinois State University is one of the most prolific producers of new teacher candidates within the state. Each year between one-sixth and one-ninth of the new teachers entering the job market graduate from an Illinois State University teacher preparation program. This number of students means that, during any semester, hundreds of students are placed for clinical and student-teaching experiences. Since the beginning of this decade the numbers have been steadily growing, placing an enormous pressure on the resources of the university and local cooperating school districts. Changes in all phases of the curriculum and

most of all in the final year of student teaching experiences, would be needed if all of these students were to progress in a timely fashion from their first inception into the Illinois State University program, through regular course work, in supervised field experiences then into the job market.

Over the years the university has established good, working relationships with a number of school districts. Many of these are districts close to the university, coming from predominantly rural areas of the state with lower population densities and smaller numbers of pre-service teacher placements. Several schools, however, are in the more populated regions including Chicago, St. Louis, and Peoria. One of these, Community Consolidated School District #21, is one of the largest elementary districts in the state. Located a few miles north of Chicago's O'Hare airport in Wheeling, Illinois, District #21 is a community of diverse people, languages and cultures. Larger numbers of elementary education majors had, over the years, engaged in their student-teaching experiences at District #21, and there was a good relationship between the school district administrators and teachers and the university. If any district-university collaboration was likely to work well, the faculty reasoned, it would be between the university and this district.

During the 1994-1995 school year contact was made, and preliminary planning meetings were held, between officials of the university and the district. A steering committee consisting of district administrators and teachers, and university administrators and faculty, was established. This group met several times throughout the year, together as a combined group and separately within just the district and the university. Discussions ranges from the mostly theoretical ("What do we want our PDS to look like?") to the mostly practical ("How should we schedule the students' day-to-day experiences?").

By March of 1995 the steering committee had made significant progress in its planning. The general framework called for the ISU-District #21 PDS project to begin in August, 1995 and to continue through the 1995-1996 academic year. A cohort of ISU elementary education majors in the last year of their studies, the exact number yet to be decided, would be placed on site in the district. The students would take their final course work, consisting of teaching methods classes, at the district taught by ISU faculty who would commute to the district for this purpose. While not in their ISU classes the students would be observing, helping and, eventually, student teaching in classrooms in District #21. A list of 14 assumptions was developed that reflected the current state of planning for the PDS:

1. ISU students will receive 16 semester hours during the Fall term for methods courses in reading, language arts, science, and social science along with the related clinical experiences. In the Spring they will receive credit for 12 semester hours of student teaching and have the option of 3 semester hours of additional course work.
2. The nine month experience will be divided into a number of phases rather than two semesters. Each phase will differ in the way course work is scheduled, the way classroom experiences are scheduled, and the level of responsibility of the student. Experiences traditionally associated with student teaching will begin during the late Fall semester and some of the methods course experiences will take place during the

Spring semester.

3. Several ISU students will be assigned to each participating school in the district, but will not be assigned to one teacher for the full year.
4. Three ISU faculty will provide primary instruction for the four methods courses.
5. ISU students will be divided into three groups. Each group will, along with one of the three ISU faculty, meet regularly in seminar to consider general issues which arise throughout the year and establish a year-long continuity to the program.
6. ISU students will spend the entire academic year at the Wheeling site with no responsibilities for experiences at ISU. Students will begin on August 21st; follow the district schedule until the end of December; begin again on January 3rd; following the District schedule during the Spring semester; and finish on May 12th.
7. ISU students will be in district schools five days a week, following the work schedule of the district. Although the schedule will vary, during the Fall term students will spend half of the time with ISU faculty and half of their time in classroom with students. (In the typical program students spend less than one-fourth of the semester in classrooms with students.)
8. During the Fall term supervision of the classroom clinical experiences will be the joint responsibility of the ISU faculty and the classroom teachers with whom the ISU students work during the year.
9. ISU students will move through the phases of the year based on their level of accomplishment rather than on a common time line.
10. Throughout the year ISU students will experience a range of grade levels with a diverse student population.
11. ISU students will be expected to apply knowledge gained from other methods courses (mathematics, music, art, theater, and physical education) as well as general pedagogical principles from other course work.
12. The year will begin with an activity that causes students to focus on the wide range of components of the classroom and will provide a mechanism for the year-long study of education.
13. Students will be guided to develop portfolios of their work and the ability to assess the components of the folio which they establish.
14. At the beginning of each phase (perhaps in conjunction with the District's grading period) a schedule of student time will be published.

Three ISU faculty from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction were selected to work with District #21 this first year and to teach the ISU classes on-site in the district. These individuals, and the courses they taught during the first semester, were:

Dr. Susan Davis Lenski	C&I255: Teaching Reading in the Elementary Schools
	C&I256: Teaching Language Arts in the Elementary Schools
Dr. Robert Fisher	C&I257: Teaching Science in the Elementary Schools
Dr. Thomas Ryan	C&I258: Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary Schools

Drs. Fisher and Ryan were to commute from ISU to District #21, a one-way drive of about 2.5 hours, once every week or two (depending on the schedule of activities at that time). These

faculty would typically spend one or two days on-site at the district, teaching their respective courses to the ISU students, consulting with students and District #21 teachers, and observing in the classrooms. Dr. Lenski, who lived much closer to the district, would be on site for several days each week. In addition to teaching her two courses Dr. Lenski would serve as the primary contact faculty for the ISU students and the District #21 personnel. During the Fall semester all three faculty would also be involved in supervising the students' field experiences in each of the various disciplines.

Information about the project was circulated to eligible ISU students and applications were accepted and reviewed. A total of 32 elementary education majors were eventually selected to participate in the first year inaugural effort. Planning meetings were held with these students to distribute information about the project as it became available, and to insure that course and graduation requirements were to be met (this was an important concern as the students would be finishing their final year of undergraduate education away from campus).

The ISU students were required to be in attendance at the district one week prior to the opening of school in late August. This week allowed the ISU faculty several days to begin their course work. It also provided a time for ISU students to meet and begin interacting with their mentor teachers. Each ISU student was assigned to a mentor teacher who would serve as the student's "home base". As the student progressed through the year they could always return to this first mentor teacher for advise and consultation. The 1995-1996 school year in District #21 began on August 25th.

The Research Design

This research was concerned with the attitudes and opinions of the university faculty and administrators participating in this first-year PDS effort. A 13-item interview format was used to collect the data for this study (see the Appendix). In February 1996 interviews were conducted with the university faculty instructing the on-site methods classes, the Dean of the College of Education, the Chair of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs. The interviews followed a semi-structured format centered around these questions.

A tape recording was made of each interview. This tape was transcribed by an independent court reporter. The resulting transcripts were then analyzed, with the assistance of the AskSAM for Windows free-form data management program. The analysis was designed to uncover two distinct elements from the interview. The first was a search for similarities in points of view and opinions among the faculty and administrators. The second was an attempt to uncover unique, yet interesting, individual differences. To protect the confidentiality of each person interviewed the names of the respondents have been removed from the following comments.

Results

Each interview began with a request for the interviewees to identify themselves, and then to describe their roles in the PDS project from its inception through the end of the Fall, 1995 semester. One respondent described his involvement in the PDS project as a natural outgrowth from the other work the college has been doing to redesign teacher education. This effort, known as Project Apprendre, has included the promotion of a professional development school. Several respondents described the concept of a PDS as having found fertile ground in the Curriculum and Instruction department, as that department was having management problems placing the ever increasing numbers of student teachers in school districts for their student teaching experiences. Dr. Tom Ryan, the previous dean or the college, was credited by one respondent with having forwarded the idea of a professional development school at Illinois State University several years earlier. Another motivator seems to have been the recent NCATE review of ISU's programs, which cited the university as not having sufficiently strongly articulated partnerships with schools. One person just had an interest in the way ISU could deliver instruction with the most efficiency. Another felt that "Illinois State is the largest producer of teachers in Illinois; it's among the top ten to fifteen largest producers of teachers in the country. If there is an issue in teacher education that relates to the quality of the programs or quality of the universities, Illinois State better be testing it because we influence so many teachers that it would be ill-advised for us not to be paying attention to it."

The Wheeling school district was recounted as having had a good relationship with ISU, one that "could be built upon." Another faculty member recalls the Superintendent from District #21 stating that he saw their school as something of a teaching hospital. There were lots of ISU students whose homes were in the suburban areas, and several faculty felt that the Wheeling location just made a nice package for them to get their clinical methods classes in a school setting. One stated, "We did not have a set model in mind when we started, and, in fact, as we think about other sites for professional development schools, our hopes are that whatever that school culture is will guide the kind of professional development school that evolves."

Routine involvement in the professional development school project varied from faculty member to faculty member. During the Fall semester Dr. Fisher would teach a methods class in science for two, three-hour sessions on Monday and Tuesday of every other week. Dr. Ryan taught a methods class in social studies on the Monday and Tuesday of the off weeks. During the mornings on the days he was teaching methods classes he would visit the schools and in the evenings he would teach a graduate class. He was also involved in writing a grant proposal concerning the PDS. Dr. Lenski spent two days a week onsite supervising, meeting with district personnel, instructing in language arts and reading, and generally performing the duties of a communications liaison.

All three faculty reported that the classes offered in Wheeling were very similar in requirements and content to the courses taught on campus. One faculty member liked having to only deal with one school's programs for a single group of thirty-two student teachers, as opposed to five or six different program from different districts for the same number of regular student teacher placements. What problems were cited most often were ascribed to planning and

logistics, not a difference in philosophy. If a few cases, however, philosophy did differ between the university faculty and the practicing district teachers, " [the philosophy] wasn't always that clean ... this is where it always came apart. I would teach the students certain strategies that we know to be very effective in the *[topic omitted]* field and the teacher in school may or may not have heard of the strategy and may or may not be receptive to something new in the class."

Many different definitions were offered when the faculty were asked to describe a professional development school. One respondent saw a PDS as having four distinct missions: providing pre-service or undergraduate teacher preparation, providing university faculty with recency of experience in teaching students in the K-12 sector, developing a system to improve staff development for teachers and administrators in the cooperating school district and facilitating research in teaching and learning. Another defined a PDS as a place where teachers, and university people, and undergraduates all learn about education and all learn in different ways, where they all teach each other in different ways. "To me what makes a difference is if there's staff development happening in the schools and also if people are delivering instruction differently from how they would be delivering it on campus and finally if the university people are either conducting research or doing some kind of learning from their own personal end."

One faculty member saw a PDS as an integration of college and university course work with what's happening in the classroom. Another had a three-part definition which involved a formal agreement between a public school (or schools) and a university that permits the placement of student teachers within that district. This arrangement should also permit the provision of pedagogy courses and methods courses to be delivered during the time these students are participating in clinical experiences, and that it provide a recency, or currency of experience, to university education faculty who may have not been in schools for a long time. Said yet another faculty member, "It provides an opportunity for our faculty to get out among the troops."

In response to questions about how a PDS should benefit the participating ISU students, the faculty perceived that Wheeling would be closer to home for many suburban students and therefore cheaper, that it would consist of a more powerful curriculum, and that students would develop more sophistication in the practice of the students' chosen profession. It would also offer more learning, allow the students to hear and try concepts, and aid the students in landing a job.

As to what ISU, as an institution, and the individual ISU faculty gain from the experience, the responses included: an opportunity for research; recency of K-12 experience; including multi-age and multi-discipline exposure for all 32 students as opposed to perhaps only 9 in another program downstate; traditional placements; and being on the cutting edge was good for self esteem and public relations/image at a minimum cost. A disadvantage cited was the difficulty of delivery and instruction at such a distance.

The most often mentioned benefits of the PDS program to the District #21 teachers and administrators were staff development program that are long-term, ongoing, systemic, at home and free of cost. However, several of the faculty had mentioned that, to the best of their knowledge, no one from ISU had yet to sit down with the Wheeling staff and develop a plan for implementing this part of the effort. Another advantage to Wheeling teachers and administrators

was that they were able to have a group of students for an entire year. It was felt that these students would have more expertise and more experience, and would be individuals who could be genuinely more helpful in the classroom.

One interviewee discussed the possibility of District #21 teachers being hired to teach one or more of the university courses. "An example being this spring. We are hiring a second Wheeling teacher who will leave her classroom duties and for this semester will supervise and serve as a mentor to our undergraduates, a nice professional opportunity for this teacher. Some of those people will be hired, in fact, to deliver instruction. Next fall the languages course will be taught by one of the Wheeling people at no cost to us." Other respondents, however, had some reservations about this plan, wondering if the district teachers would be up on the latest theories and research to best carry out this university-level instructional responsibility. One wondered how the university maintains a sense of "ownership" in, and property over, the instruction if we were to have so little control in the instructional process.

One of the biggest advantages of the program cited by the faculty was having the students in the classroom to lend an extra set of hands to the regular classroom teacher. The PDS student teachers seemed to take on more responsibility, were more sophisticated and therefore a bigger help, allowed the mentor teachers to have release time to help kids that were having trouble, and provided another adult with whom the classroom students could bond. These factors combined to insure that there were more people engaged in being reflecting, instructing, assuring and reinforcing for each of the elementary classroom students. One faculty member said, "The ultimate test is the elementary students start referring to the university students interchangeably with the teacher. This occurred in many of the classrooms in Wheeling, so it's also the benefit that kids associated with positive adult people."

The response to a question about other benefits met with less consensus. One faculty member believed that the community benefitted from the influx of enthusiastic youngsters (the ISU students). Schools who can recruit our student teachers from the Wheeling experience, or who hear about the program and want to start their own PDS, and even the State Board of Education (who is thought to be promoting PDS's and could be used as a positive influence if this model is successful) were also named as potential beneficiaries of this program.

Possible drawbacks of the PDS effort include the expense of running the program. As one administrator stated, "Money is clearly an issue. Right now, the money's coming in, we've got $50,000 one year and $30,000 last year, we'll get a little extra money next year. If this money doesn't become a permanent part of the base, then the likelihood of these surviving is lessened, so the constant searching for monies is a drawback." Also mentioned was the need to recruit faculty who see participating in an off-campus PDS experience as part of their job. "It's harder on faculty when they're away from campus, it's harder on tenure decisions; it's harder for them to participate in the work of the college, it's hard for them to be valued by the reward system that's institutionalized on the campus level." Environmentally it was felt that we need to consider the number of holidays that fall on Mondays, the fact that our students may be in a completely foreign environment and need additional help to acclimate, and the magnitude of the work that evolves out of the student's work with both the classroom teacher and the classes when

compared to the classroom-only or field experiences-only work seen by a student on campus.

The faculty viewed the PDS as different from traditional student teaching programs in several ways. One was that the program links the public school as a more direct partner with the student teacher's education. The faculty was most enthusiastic about students having had experience with certain aspects of instruction (through their classroom observations) by the time they heard about them in the methods class and the ability to see firsthand what the methods' teachers lecture and reading were talking about (how these elements were actually accomplished in a real classroom). Related to this was the feeling that learning was more immediate, more immersed and that the student participants became stronger partners in the instructional role sooner. One District #21 teacher said, "we can't tell the ISU student teachers from our brand new teachers, and see, they're a year behind. When you can't tell them from one another, their demeanors and in their sense of responsibly, then that's a good thing."

When asked about the goals of the ISU-District #21 PDS project the general consensus was that there was no set model in mind. "We really have let the program evolve and as people have gotten together to plan, good ideas have been shared and we're tried them and I think that was the one stipulation when we started out with we're open to any kinds of suggestions (from) both sides." They hoped to create a better experience to connect the academic (university) side with the professional (K-12) side so the students would be more ready to be teachers, and, of course, help the students' chances of employment. For several of the ISU faculty the goals were that the PDS experience would create a chance for the ISU faculty to gain a better understanding of the problems of practice and improve the teacher education courses and ultimately research. The PDS program created good public relations material for ISU as the number one producer of teachers. It also provided the opportunity for offering off-campus, graduate-level credit producing possibilities. The Wheeling teachers and administrators had help at the school, access to bright, enthusiastic student teachers to add impetus for change, first examination of 32 students for future hiring needs and free, local graduate credit for their staff development. The Wheeling classroom students benefitted from the presence of a new teacher and a greater opportunity to reach their educational goals due to the increased attention.

The general feeling by the end of the first semester was that the PDS program had been a good experience. Each respondent felt that the group had all made a good stab at that first attempt and that the goals were being met realistically. The feedback from teachers and administrators at District #21 was likewise an overall sense of positiveness.

As part of the interview respondents were asked to tell us how much he or she liked or disliked particular aspects of the program and give a reason or two why that was the case. On the subject of travel the answers were diverse. One person indicated that the traveling was not a bother while another indicated it meant not spending as much time on-site, either on campus or in the school. A distinction was made between the time it took to travel and the effect of the separation from campus. Some felt it was necessary to have a presence other than just in Central Illinois and that being up in Wheeling was just as easy as being down here.

Workload brought out a resounding "too much!" from those involved on a daily basis. The

number of students per instructor was heavier than with a comparable on-campus course, and with more students expected in 1996-1997 academic year. One concerned faculty member stated, "The only way we see it next Fall is to have two half-classes that we will spend less time in the school and we will spend more time in the classroom, so there's a definite workload phenomenon that got to be addressed." Another said, "There was way too much work in developing this program, it took much more time than I anticipated." Another commented, "Wheeling adds to the workload because if it were just running regular student teachers that would be being managed primarily by someone else. Also I believe that there is the possibility for lots of error. I'm exercising a good deal more control than I might ordinarily be the case. That's time consuming."

For varied reasons the reaction of the faculty to the concept of the ISU student cohort group was a resounding "Yes!" One ISU instructor felt it allowed for an integration of two courses that, on campus, would have to be taught separately. The concept of a cohort offered a support system for the students. Although another respondent had no problem with the cohort concept, he did not see the it as a new phenomenon. "... cohorts have been around for a long time. I would say that at least this year, we made no unique advantage of that phenomena in the Wheeling program, we didn't do anything different in that respect than we did on campus." Cohort groups make the management process much easier, reducing the local demand for placements for student teaching and pre-clinical experiences.

Generally the comments about Wheeling's facilities and resources were: "great", "wonderful", and "fabulous". The few negatives that were voiced centered around the length of time it took to get the technology up and running -- about six months later than desired -- and acquiring resources such as construction paper, copying and scissors for certain student projects.

Communication with the ISU students drew mixed responses. As an example, "...e-mail was not up and running in a timely way for me to require that the students to send lesson plans and ask questions. Not a single staff member up there ever used e-mail and so that electronic communication never happened. We did not spend nearly enough time communicating, but that's all four of us, that's not just there -- even when we had the core program and the cohorts, the faculty did not team very well. There are going to have to be other mechanisms of communication." Another view was "... using Email quite a bit and reports that is keeping the communications up, a view not shared by all. *[Another faculty]* is also using Email and does not report communications problems. Now, student reports on communications are yet to be measured, but it may be that the students take a different view than the faculty, that they don't believe that there's as much communication as the faculty does."

Phases were another hot topic for the faculty respondents. One faculty remembers, "The phase phenomena last Spring that we talked about should have varying levels of responsibility and that in fact students could -- not at their own rate, but more at different rates, that conceivably some students could begin what we call student teaching by Thanksgiving, others might not begin until Valentine's day if they're really not ready -- we didn't implement that. That was not beyond our control, there were just too many variables to take care of, so moving from site to site is great, the phase is something we have to consider in the future and see if we can work out the details." Generally everyone felt that phases were a good idea but that too many

were attempted too soon, without adequate experience in how phases would work. Another voiced a common feeling, "One of the problems with the phases, and this has been a problem that surfaced from the very beginning that never does get put to rest and that is that we're trying to do too many things with the students, too much time in classroom and not enough time in formal instruction because they're treating the students in the Fall as traditional student teachers is an issue that we cannot get killed and so there is too much of an expectation that students will spend too much time in classrooms absent from focusing on something they're doing for their (methods) class, too much what you'd think of as student teaching time."

Everyone felt the ISU students were a good group of students -- not necessarily the best but also not the worst. The description from one faculty went as follows: "They -- well, they were not just college students, they were beginning to be teachers, and a person who is a teacher has -- is looking at the world a little differently, actually -- you're just not going to class to think about how you can get through these assignments or get through your grade, you're looking at how to actually do a good job teaching kids, and the students, these particular ISU students, most of them rose to the occasion and did a really good job starting to make that transfer from being a student who just learns it or doesn't learn it to being a teacher who really needs to learn things."

The opportunity for research seemed abundant. One faculty member expressed an interest in some work on the topic of staff development. Another had the following ideas already in place, "Well, I think how I described how I did innovative teaching. For research, I did a few things, I instituted this observe teaching experience which I'm going to be hoping to present and to write up, as a new type of model for teaching people how to teach literacy. I also have the students delineate their beliefs and practices and where they got this information, from one of the projects that I had them do, so people tend to think that -- or -- the research seems to indicate from what I know that teachers teach either the way they were taught when they were young or what they see teachers do and I think that may not be the case and some of the data that I've collected, I'm hoping, will indicate otherwise, so I did those two things the first semester. This semester -- and I also had the students in one of their teaching assignments to work on one of their particular kinds of teaching lessons and for the second semester I'm going to be continuing a research project and have the student teachers do the teaching on these kinds of lessons and they're going to do some coding of student responses, so I have another research project going second semester."

The list of recommendations for future years was lengthy. The most cited improvements included: improving the methods and frequency of communications, expanding the research dimensions, listening to the feedback from the pre-service teachers, and making the classes more structured. One faculty member added, "I rather suspect that the expectations that we as instructors have for the students will change. I know from my personal look at the situation, the relationship that we've established with the teachers will allow us to make requests that we didn't make this past year. I think I'm in a position now to say to classroom teachers, I'd really like to have this student have the opportunity to teach a [particular] lesson during the second week of school, can we run that into the program somehow. Whereas last year, we were waiting to see, you know, what their curriculum was like, what their plan of action was and we were kind of going slow about what we would ask them to do, so I think those kinds of changes will affect the program fairly dramatically. We know their curriculum now a lot better than we knew it in

the Fall."

Another member of the participating faculty opined, "I don't think I can speak to the day-to-day improvement for Wheeling. I'll be really interested in the results of our research study, particularly what it shows in the second year. For example, one of the research questions that I'm most interested in is how our first-year teachers who have had the Wheeling experience compare with similar students who haven't. I mean, is all this worth it? Have we, in fact, changed the way they're inducted, prepared, to what extent does this last? I mean, you know, is it something that's an inoculation for a couple of years and is it worth it? Is all this worth it? Have we made a difference? That's the enduring question.

A final comment from one of the faculty seemed to echo a feeling from the entire group. "This is not a [true] PDS and everybody here knows it, but the philosophy is if you call it a PDS, maybe somebody will believe it." There is a shared belief that, given enough time and continued interest, this program will evolve into an organization that does more closely resemble the basic tenants of the Holmes Group PDS.

Summary

Overall, the ISU-District #21 PDS effort of 1995-1996 appears to have been a success. Participating ISU faculty regarded the program quite highly, and from all of the participants have described several benefits not found in the traditional model.

Several points have clearly emerged as issues that need to be addressed by faculty and administrators as the program is continued:

1. The distance, and travel time, between the university and the district.
   Faculty, although generally supportive of off-campus instruction, view travel as waste of precious time. Students, who might only see a faculty member once or twice every week or two, need to have a means for asking questions and resolving problems in a more timely fashion. While a resolution for this issue might involve selecting districts that are closer geographically to the university for future PDS implementations it does not rule out participating with districts that are further away. Creative means of instruction, perhaps involving the use of distance education technologies and e-mail and the Internet, should be investigated and applied.

2. Coordination among university faculty and district teachers.
   A PDS, at least that envisioned by the Holmes Group, is not a one-way exchange. Information and experience is supposed to flow from the university to the district as well as from the district to the university. Most of the coordination this first year was concerned with scheduling and planning. Now that a model has been established coordination activities can shift to the more substantial elements of integrating district classroom and university classroom practices. For example, district personnel can be engaged to teach university courses while university faculty participate in greater numbers of classroom-based experiences. Care and planning need to be exercised, however, to insure that the two-way street is really constructed, and that university responsibilities are not merely shifted to the location of the district.

3. Continued support and participation.
   The first year of any effort is always the most tenuous, and is rarely the best indicator of the potential of a new program. Some practitioners, in fact, believe that it is not until the sixth year that a new program can finally be judged for its own merits. If the university-district collaboration embodied in this PDS is to fully mature it must be continued and encouraged to develop. Both the university and the district must be willing to allocate the necessary facility, personnel, and other fiscal resources to make this happen. The long-term effects of the PDS program on student job placement and career retention must also be examined. Otherwise, easier and less costly means will be used at the expense of a teacher preparation strategy that could have much more far reaching benefits.

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Faculty Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself and give your job title.
2. Describe your role in the PDS project from its inception through the end of the Fall, 1995 semester.
3. Describe the activities you engage in during a typical day (week) for the ISU-Wheeling PDS project:
   a. Nature and duration of contact(s).
   b. Relevance of the contact(s) to PDS project, future planning, etc.
   c. What courses did you teach (describe course content & student activities)
4. Why did you (ISU) decide to get involved with the a PDS project?
   a. Why in Wheeling?
5. The term "PDS" is used to describe many different things. In your own opinion, using what you are accomplishing at Wheeling as a model, please:
   a. Describe a "PDS" in general.
   b. Tell how it should benefit the ISU students.
   c. What should ISU, as an institution, and ISU faculty gain from it?
   d. How do the teachers and administrators at Wheeling benefit?
   e. How do the students at Wheeling benefit?
   f. What are the other benefits, real or potential, from this effort?
   g. What are the possible drawbacks?
6. How is all of what you have described above (Q #5) different from what is regularly done to help create new teachers?
7. In your opinion, what are the goals of the ISU-Wheeling PDS project:
   a. For the ISU students?
   b. For ISU (as an institution) and for the participating ISU faculty?
   c. For the Wheeling teachers and administrators?
   d. For the Wheeling students?
   e. For anyone else?
8. As of the first semester, how well have these goals been met (for each group)?
9. Please tell us how much, and why, you like or dislike the following aspects of the PDS project:
   a. Travel.
   b. Workload.
   c. Teaching assignment and schedule.
   d. Cohort group (ISU students).
   e. Wheeling facilities and resources/
   f. Communication with the ISU students.
   g. Communication with Wheeling contact (teachers).
   h. Phases (ISU student scheduling).
   i. Monetary cost.
   j. Time & energy cost.
   k. The ISU students.
   l. The Wheeling teachers & administrators.
10. Please describe the opportunities you have had, through the PDS project, for:
    a. Research.
    b. Teaching.
    c. Service.
11. How would you recommend improving a PDS in future years?
12. What is your role in the PDS during the Spring 1996 semester?
13. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

THANK YOU!

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