Shared Vulnerability in Professional Learning: Growing Instructional Coaches in a Culture of PDS Partnership

Jill Corkery, State College Area School District
Kris Hall, State College Area School District
Jess Jeffries, State College Area School District
Kristen Laskowski, State College Area School District
Gail Romig, State College Area School District
Jennifer Tranell, State College Area School District
Brian Peters, Humble Independent School District
Anne Elrod Whitney, Pennsylvania State University

ABSTRACT: In a school district context where a well-developed district-wide PDS partnership had been in operation for more than 15 years, a team of instructional coaches was formed of district teachers who left their classrooms for two to four years under the leadership of a curriculum coordinator. In this article, members of the coaching team offer illustrations of their experiences learning to coach in a PDS context. Using principles of coaching as partnership (Knight, 2007), they argue that a prevailing culture supported by the PDS history provided conditions in which shared vulnerability—and consequently, coaching—was possible.

NAPDS Essentials Addressed: #1/A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community; #2/A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community; #3/Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need; #4/A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants

Introduction

In this article, we describe the development of a team of instructional coaches across an academic year. While the coaching program was new, its development unfolded in the context of a 15-year-old PDS partnership between the school district's elementary and middle schools and the university next door (Nolan et al., 2010). As we will argue, the PDS partnership context proved fertile ground in which a partnership model of coaching (Knight, 2007) could germinate and grow. We offer this anecdotal account as evidence of the potential of PDS partnerships to truly fulfill their moniker as "professional development" schools—that is, places in which an overall culture of professional development exists, not only enacted through the preparation of teachers and the explicit activities of teachers working as teacher educators, but also in a wider and more pervasive way. Once a district develops a culture of fostering the growth of teachers at all stages of their careers via PDS work, opportunities for all kinds of other professional development open up as well.

> Some of the coaches "cut their educational teeth" in an inquiry-based environment that was fostered by the PDS. Most of the current coaches are former PDS interns. Our [initial] leader [was] a former PDS mentor. That means that our team has been greatly influenced by the practice of inquiry for teachers and for our students as learners. When you add to that the number of teachers we work with who are also former interns and mentors, you get a lot of people who value inquiry...One claim I feel comfortable making is that Penn State's PDS has had a big influence on our instructional coaching team. My evidence is the structure of our interactions with teachers (questioning, not telling), the promotion of inquiry, and the use of Critical Inquiry Groups as a way to push ourselves as educators. Each of these components is a part of the

> ongoing work that we do with the teachers we coach and the children we teach.

These words, written by one of our team of instructional coaches as our first year of coaching ended, reflect the close ties between our history of engaging in a Professional Development School partnership over the past 15 years and our present and future of developing a team of instructional coaches in a school district. As instructional coaching teams have become more common in districts' efforts to support professional development of teachers, so has it become more apparent that some settings are more conducive than others to success in coaching. Yet research on the specific conditions that support the development of coaching initiatives is scarce (Knight, 2008).

Instructional Coaches as Partners

While the ultimate aim of instructional coaching is to improve teaching for the sake of students, key to that aim is the empowerment of teachers to both reflect upon and make changes in the teaching they are already doing. For example, Dantonio (2001) characterizes coaching as an "empowering process that helps teachers rediscover themselves" (p. 15), and Zepeda (2008) refers to "empowering individuals to grow and develop" (p. 165). Yet helping teachers to empower themselves for change also requires seeing them through hard moments. Reflecting upon one's own practice and seeing a need for improvement means admitting that all is not already well in hand, and trying something new involves taking risks of failure. It is as Fullan (1982) asserts: "all real change involves loss, anxiety, and struggle" (p. 25). Thus instructional coaching, in which one person aims to help another person make real change, involves a good deal of vulnerability on the part of the person being coached.

For this reason, we embrace a view of coaching as a partnership in which both parties are vulnerable together. Knight (2007) calls instructional coaches "individuals who are full-time professional developers, on-site in schools" who "work with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices" (p. 12). More particularly, a partnership approach to instructional coaching engages seven core principles:

> Equality: Teachers and coaches are equal partners.
> Choice: Teachers should have choice regarding what and how they learn.
> Voice: Professional learning should empower and respect the voices of teachers.
> Dialogue: Professional learning should enable authentic dialogue.
> Reflection: Reflection is an integral part of professional learning.
> Praxis: Teachers should apply their learning to their real-life practice as they are learning.
> Reciprocity: Instructional coaches should expect to get as much as they give. (Knight, 2007)

While coaching as an approach to working with teachers is still relatively uncommon, it has been found to be effective in helping teachers develop inquiring stances, expand instructional repertoires, and connect classroom practices to wider rationales (Frey & Kelly, 2002). Inquiry is a powerful stance for professional development (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) and has been shown to lead to more comprehensive, fundamental change in teaching practices than more strategy-focused approaches to professional development (Whitney et al., 2008). Our coaching team shared these same aims. While the decision to position ourselves as partners was intentional, our focus on the importance of vulnerability in that partnership has been more surprising.

Building a Team of Instructional Coaches in a Culture of Partnership

The PDS partnership that was already in place at the time coaching began in this district reflected principles of its own that were well aligned with those articulated by Knight (2007) for instructional coaching. Founded in 1998 after five years of preliminary conversations, the State College Area School District-Pennsylvania State University Professional Development School Partnership exists across an entire school district and the teacher education programs at its partner university (Nolan et al., 2010, p. 20). Throughout its history, this PDS partnership has engaged the five philosophical stances articulated by the NAPDS (accompanied by four logistical features to comprise nine essentials). These include:

1. A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community;
2. A school–university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community;
3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need;
4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants;
5. Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants. (NAPDS, 2008)

Locally, these principles have been made manifest in a number of ways that, we now see, have helped to position the district well for our later efforts in coaching. For example, the partnership as a whole has centered on inquiry, including such structures as critical friends groups (Dunne & Honts, 1998; Norman, Golian, & Hooker, 2005; Senge, 1990) and an annual Inquiry Conference, in which not only interns but also mentors and university personnel present ongoing inquiry work to peers and guests. Leadership roles have been shared across school and university lines and have been intentionally rotated among

people: "Professional Development Associates" (PDAs) include classroom teachers who come out of their classrooms for two or three years to work in hybrid roles spanning the more conventional titles of supervisor, methods course instructor, and inquiry facilitator (Burns, 2012).

In contrast to many PDS partnerships which focus on relationships between one school building and one university program, our PDS has intentionally included all elementary and middle school buildings across an entire district. Finally, given the longstanding and close ties between school and university personnel (both inside and outside the PDS) as well as other connections between the schools and a range of university partners in disciplines that have arisen from the close-knit nature of our college town, and given the presence of special educators and paraprofessionals in most classrooms on a daily basis as well, in general it is not uncommon in the district for a single classroom to have three or four adults in it at various times throughout the day. All of these factors have contributed to our experiences in working toward a partnership model in instructional coaching as well.

It was within this context that district administrators decided to build a team of instructional coaches in the school district. Led initially by coauthor Brian Peters in his former role as elementary curriculum coordinator for the district, these teachers would agree to come out of their classrooms for two to four years. In writing this article, we are also joined by a university faculty member who has been a professional development partner.

In our work as coaches, we would be asked to engage in inquiry, reflection, and collaboration toward the shared purpose of improving instruction in elementary classrooms across the district. As the initial cohort of coaches, we would also need to develop ways of working where there had not been instructional coaches before, guided explicitly by the framework of coaching as partnership described above (Knight, 2007). The development of these ways of working has been both difficult and exhilarating. As one of us wrote in a reflective journal entry,

> With us it all started with vision—a vision that was bigger than anything that we could imagine. It was a Big Picture vision with a very clear purpose of Inquiry, Reflection & Collaboration (at all costs and at an honest and careful pace). The coaches worked deliberately to not only build ways of working with the teachers in schools, but also ways of working with one another as a team.

Another of us recalls,

> Our first gathering together was not in a school, conference room, or traditional meeting place but instead in a home around a dining room table...we began by listening to each other as we shared a metaphor for this role. Before we left that night, one of the last tasks we completed was to determine a way to stay closely connected. Right from the beginning we knew that this was an important for our team. We read the same articles, went to the same trainings and, through conversation, we began to grasp what an instructional coach would look like. Together we created what we thought this role could be and worked together to create this shared vision.

Through initial reading, co-planning, and shared reflection, we coaches gradually prepared to work directly with teachers. "Nobody was the expert," one of us recalled:

> We were all in the same boat and had to figure out how we wanted these sessions to work. We all listened to the thoughts and ideas that were shared and created the first professional development session as instructional coaches. This set the tone for how people would interpret our role and the fact that we did it together allowed the teachers, principals, as well ourselves, to see our group as a team rather than individual coaches.

We do not see our story as a finished story by any means, or even as an unqualified success story. Yet we do think it important to develop how PDS, as a partnership in which the professional development of *all* teachers has been a stated goal, has indeed helped to support the development of this new mode of professional development work in the district. All in all, in our daily work as instructional coaches we find ourselves living the principles of partnership (Knight, 2007) in ways that resonate strongly with the PDS idea and which connect directly to our earlier experiences in that partnership.

Illustrations of Our Experiences

In the sections that follow, we offer brief stories and commentary from reflections on our inaugural year as instructional coaches that show how this is the case, not as data in a research study but as traces of the vulnerable and developing process of becoming coaches. The reflections were written in journal-like "quickwrites" done in a series of meetings. First, individuals would write freely on what they had been thinking and noticing; then, these informal pieces of writing would be shared around the table to start face-to-face conversations. Thus they were written not as data or documentation but simply as thinking tools. Only later did we assemble these in a more deliberate inquiry, look together for patterns, and notice connections to Knight's principles of partnership. We present them here with the goal of providing a portrait of instructional coaches learning to do the job, with attention to ways the existing PDS created conditions that supported us in doing so. We present them as "illustrations" of our experiences (Bohan & Many, 2011, p. xii) that we hope will help others envision their own work in a new way.

Equality: Coaches and Teachers are Equal Partners

> A teacher was starting a Writer's Workshop in her classroom. She had read articles, books, visited other

> classrooms where a workshop was established, but still hadn't figured out how to make it work in her classroom. She asked her Instructional Coach for help in how to get a workshop up and running. Instead of telling the teacher about how to do this, the IC came in and had the teacher talk about what she knew and wanted out of a Writer's Workshop in their classroom. Through this conversation a plan was established and together the teacher and coach determined the steps they would take together. Learning and growing as a pair, we spent the next few weeks reflecting, ironing out the details of what worked well and what needed to be changed for next time, both of us taking something away from this process.

As Knight (2007) points out, "Equality does not mean that coaches and teachers have equal knowledge on every topic, but it does mean that the collaborating teacher's opinions are as important as the coach's" (p. 41). Thus we strive to work *with* teachers, not *for* teachers and certainly not *on* teachers. We position our work with any teacher as shared inquiry, with the teacher positioned as owner of that inquiry. The ideas must first come from the teacher, and then we work together as a team to find the path that we will take together.

This collaborative approach to coaching involves habits of listening, sharing ideas, and working through questions together – habits we recognize from our previous PDS work in which the triad of mentor teacher, intern, and PDA team up together for an entire year to work with and learn from each other in shared vulnerability. Because the PDS has been such a strong influence on our district's learning community, our teachers have grown accustomed to the idea of an equal partnership among various learners and the idea that their learning is in their control. Similarly, we strive to display in our interactions our sense that as coaches we are simply teachers among teachers.

Choice: Teachers Should Have Choice of When and How They Learn

> Part of coaching is helping teachers explore the choices that they have in front of them and helping them dive deeper into the choices they make. I, too, was working with a teacher on setting up Reader's Workshop in her classroom. She had been considering it, she had researched it, but she just hadn't fully embraced it yet...When she was ready to fully start her workshop, I was there to support her, but all that I was doing was supporting a choice she had made on her own. She just needed someone to be the scaffolding for her as she reached for the next branch on the tree, trying to get to the top for the amazing view. In the same way, as interns reach higher and higher into the trees, their PDA is there to support them as they make choices that will affect their future teaching careers in more ways than they can even imagine at the time.

The most beneficial professional development that a teacher can receive stems from the questions that a teacher is most passionate about. That is the first level of choice that aids in the growth of the teacher: allowing teachers to choose what they will learn more about is empowering. The next level of choice comes from the processes they will engage: Will they work alone, with colleagues, or with someone at the university level? Will they explore teacher resources, observe colleagues, or survey their students? Instructional coaches help support teachers as they make some of these choices, and they help foster collaboration and reflection along the way.

In PDS, likewise, an intern engages yearlong inquiry supported by his or her PDA who, like an instructional coach, is there to support decision-making about their inquiry as it unfolds. We extend this thread from the PDS year throughout a teacher's long career: Like a PDA for an intern, an instructional coach is there not to make choices for the teacher or to deliver a specific set of ideas, but to support teachers as they make the series of choices that constitute professional development.

Voice: Professional Learning Should Empower and Respect the Voices of Teachers

> Several years ago our district changed from one math program to another. The majority of teachers adopted the new program and did their best to make it work. The transition has been challenging, and many teachers have been forced to analyze their math teaching, goals and beliefs. Recently, another coach and I were working with teachers as they were curriculum mapping for the following year. The process was rigorous and the teachers were reflecting critically using a variety of math resources. They kept finding themselves questioning why they do what they do in math. These are very big and important questions. The conversation had moved into how students develop number sense in math. After sharing her opinion, Mary stopped us and said "I feel smart again." Mary has always been smart. Her comment wasn't about intelligence. She was recognizing that she had a voice and we were listening.
>
> On another occasion, I attended a meeting of similar grade teachers. The teachers didn't speak. They were not comfortable or not interested in sharing at that time. It was an awkward situation for me. I didn't understand why they weren't sharing. Then an interesting thing happened. After that meeting, one by one, each of those teachers came to me on their own. They started to share what they were really feeling (insecurities, frustrations). I began to realize that they needed to feel heard and they needed to do it in a way that they felt comfortable, when they were able to trust me, as opposed to doing so in a risky whole-group meeting.

> Looking ahead to next year, I am eager to see where those relationships are able to go. We can begin to work on the philosophy that the teacher has and then move forward to develop a voice. As a coach, it is important for me to help people to feel supported within their environment. Teachers should feel that they have people behind them, cheering them on.

Listening is a critical part of our role, simply listening. Yet oftentimes, teachers aren't sure what they want to say, and the first comments that come out are complaints. As we have grown over the course of an initial year of coaching, we have started to realize that those initial criticisms are usually not the real questions. If we continue to listen and build trust, we are able to get to the real inquires.

We must look at the entire teacher, not just at what he or she is saying at first. Similarly, in our efforts to elicit and respond to the voices of teachers, we have to understand that they speak not only to us but also in the presence of one another—often in groupings where trust has not developed or has even been betrayed. When individual teachers approached this coach after an unusually terse and awkward whole-group meeting, it became clear that their developing trust in the coach surpassed the trust they had in each other. Mary, too, felt trusted and safe sharing her concerns, beliefs and passions with us. Doing that made her "feel smart again." In other words, we see voice as an outcome of trust; where conditions prevent sharing vulnerability, voices simply will not be raised. It is one thing, we note, to encourage group members to raise their voices—quite another, we find, to ensure that we hear and respond.

Dialogue: Professional Learning Should Enable Authentic Dialogue

> About halfway through the school year, I found myself asking, "Why do I feel a disconnect between my the two school buildings I coach in? What is missing? What can I do about it?" During my reflection, it became very apparent to me that I was having an open and natural dialogue with one particular principal I worked with—but not the other.
>
> The dialogue with the one principal came very naturally because we had a pre-existing relationship, having worked with each other prior to this year. My ongoing dialogue with this principal would seamlessly result in more conversations between ourselves and the classroom teachers in that building. The end result? More opportunities for reflection and collaboration between the three participants: myself, the classroom teachers in that building, and the building principal.
>
> This wasn't happening as often in the other building. So what did I do about it? I made a point to start popping in and starting a casual conversation with my other principal, which would then lead to something specifically related to work we were all doing as coaches, situations in our building together, or similar questions we both had. It was not a difficult thing and did not feel forced in any way. It was just a conversation. I had to build my relationship with this principal in order to have a more authentic dialogue. This conversation led to many others and began to filter into the classrooms and teachers of that building.
>
> What happened next was very exciting—the communication between each building principal and me began to stretch into a shared dialogue between the three of us. I began meeting with both principals on a regular basis, and together we collaborated in doing some cross building professional development with our teachers.

The "triad" effect that was beginning to take place in the vignette above echoes the triad relationship already modeled in the PDS framework in our schools. In mutual dialogue, the Penn State intern, mentor classroom teacher, and PDA plan and inquire together for the professional development of all. Instructional coaching involves triads as well. At the beginning of our work as coaches, we did not realize how important it would be to foster dialogue among the teacher-coach-principal triad. Yet doing so is important if coaching is to promote actual self-sponsored learning. Shared vulnerability is required. Without it, coaching can have the appearance of remediation, in which a principal "prescribes" coaching for a teacher he or she sees as struggling. This positioning leaves just one person vulnerable and just one person subject to change—the teacher—and it is difficult for anyone to learn under those conditions. When triadic dialogue develops, more authentic learning becomes possible. The ideal triad of classroom teacher, instructional coach, and principal evolved from simply making more of an effort to talk.

Reflection: Reflection is an Integral Part of Professional Learning

> Many times as a supervisor/coach I am pulled into a dilemma that a teacher or group of teachers are experiencing. Often, this has been grappled with for quite some time without resolution, even though the answer is right there. As the supervisor/coach, my primary role becomes that of Listener. I hear the question or the dilemma. I may ask a question or two that enables greater dialogue. In the course of the dialogue the teacher will say something and then pause. That pause is the light bulb going on. What just happened? Reflection. The teacher self-reflected and in turn, found the answer. The key is that they found the answer. They were not told the answer.

These words describe reflection in the context of teacher collaboration, but it's worth mentioning that we have used reflection in the same way for ourselves as a group of coaches. This article, for instance, grew of out a series of reflective writings that we had done as a way of processing and problem-solving the challenges we were encountering each day as we felt our way into our work as coaches. We have long had a tradition of reflective writing in our PDS, in which interns keep journals, and in our district culture as a whole writing is a common way of working (a group of local teacher-writers, for example, publishes a column in the local paper). Professional learning in partnership means that we deliberately make space (and time) for reflection. Though it might be faster to say, "Here, try this," waiting a while for reflection usually leads to something better.

Praxis: Teachers Should Apply Their Learning to Their Real-Life Practices as They are Learning

> My job as an instructional coach is to work through changes with teachers. One teacher approached me about using math talk moves more effectively in her classroom. I scheduled time to go to her room to collect data, model how to facilitate math conversations, and to co-teach a math lesson. After this, she practiced using talk moves before inviting me back a week later. The changes I observed were significant. It was quite obvious she was applying what she had learned about listening more closely and using more talk moves to promote conversations among her students.

When we work with teachers who want to change their teaching practices, one of our guiding questions includes "what do you want this to look like and sound like in your classroom?" Once teachers begin to put into place the new teaching techniques, we then make observations of their practices and provide feedback so that we can continue to monitor what is working well and what needs to be refined. Learning, application, and feedback go hand in hand.

While it can be difficult to try new things in front of a colleague or coach, our PDS has cultivated an environment of ongoing learning. Over the course of a year, mentors and interns co-plan lessons, co-teach, and observe each other, in much the same way that our classroom teachers and coaches now work together. Feedback is provided each step of the way. When it is typical that a normal day in the classroom might involve adults as varied as a teacher, intern, PDA, principal, parent helper, learning support teacher, paraprofessional, and perhaps an autism support teacher, all entering and leaving the room at various times, jumping in unprompted to conference with kids as they write, or asking one another for help, some of the stigma of teaching in front of others falls away, and with it a barrier to praxis.

Reciprocity: Instructional Coaches Should Expect to Get as Much as They Give

> Intimidation and fear were prominent as I entered a 5th grade classroom to support a new teacher as she began to structure writer's workshop in her classroom. With my own background mainly focused in primary, I wondered how I would be supportive or helpful in an area where I had little experience. As we began to work on small pieces of the structure together, both of our confidence increased. We watched students collaborate and create incredible pieces because of the structure we had provided them. Over the weeks and months we worked together, I grew to love the climate I had once found so intimidating.

So much of our work and conversations as coaches have focused on shared vulnerability. Both parties had much to learn. Together both were successful by shared research, shared conversation, co-teaching, and shared reflection. While both were new to fifth grade writing workshop, neither of us was new to those habits of sharing; throughout, we drew on our earlier experiences in the context of inquiry in the PDS as a guide for these conversations.

Closing Thoughts: Extending the "PD" in "PDS"

We see a need for research that would help us to clarify and extend our emerging understandings of coaching back into the work of the PDS. For example, first, we wonder how formal inquiry (shared by mentors and interns) and informal inquiry (shared by those same mentors and coaches) inform and influence one another. How do the structured inquiry activities that occur in our work with interns link to—or remain separate from—the inquiry in which coaches ask experienced teachers to engage? This question is of local interest to us, but it also contributes to a broader interest in how activities of formal professional development programs might eventually become freestanding and unprompted activities of everyday professional life.

Second, we wonder how the principles of partnership and features of PDS culture that we have linked here are connected to the specific practices coaches use in their work. For example, how might coaches use strategies such as data collection or analysis of student work (frequent PDS activities) to best effect as they interact with teachers? This research would help to clarify specifically how coaching might be done with and without a pre-existing PDS context.

Third, we think it is important to explore similarities and differences between supervision and coaching. Anecdotally, we know of schools and districts in which so-called coaches are in fact in a de facto supervisory capacity. This positioning is at odds with the partnership model we have argued for here. Yet what helpful connections might also exist between the work that our

PDAs do in supervising interns and the work that instructional coaches do in supporting practicing teachers?

We enjoy these wonderings, signals that they are of our hearts for inquiry and our willingness to do the hard work of change. Some readers may read this essay as a love letter to our district and PDS. But this story is not only a love story. Taken as a whole, the story we are telling in this article is both a story about our ways of working as coaches in a partnership model and a story about how 15 years of PDS involvement has indeed created a culture here in which professional development is a norm for all. What Knight (2007) calls partnership, we also name as "shared vulnerability." Instructional coaches are, in the end, teaching and learning partners, and as such we are expected to learn as well as teach. In a partnership, one partner does not drag the other anywhere—at least not for long.

Our colleagues who sat in the very first exploratory meetings about the idea of a PDS partnership here, more than 15 years ago, tell us that in those first days, it was extremely difficult just to get the relevant parties to the table. Both the schools and the university were viewing each other as people who might do things *to* one another or, more optimistically, *for* one another—but certainly not *with* each other in any real shared sense. Today we are not without problems, of course, but we note that our PDS has become more than a site for the preparation of teachers or for the professional development of those who directly involve themselves as mentor teachers. It has grown into a source for ways of working—structures and habits of collaboration—that have supported professional development in general. In the PDS we have learned how to be partners, helping one another only as much as we are vulnerable to one another. It is a lesson we continue to learn now as instructional coaches. SUP

References

Burns, R. W. (2012). *Conceptualizing supervision in the Professional Development School context: A case analysis*. Doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania State University. Retrieved from http://gradworks.umi.com/35/21/3521178.html

Dantonio, M. (2001). *Collegial coaching: Inquiry into the teaching self* (2nd Ed.). Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa International.

Dunne, F., & Honts, F. (1998). *"That group really makes me think!" Critical friends groups and the development of reflective practitioners*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED423228

Frey, N., & Kelly, P. R. (2002). The effects of staff development, modeling, and coaching of interactive writing on instructional repertoires of K-1 teachers in a professional development school. *Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 51*, 176-185.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The meaning of educational change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Knight, J. (2008). *Coaching: Approaches and perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

NAPDS. (2008). *What it means to be a professional development school.* National Association for Professional Development Schools. Retrieved from http://www.napds.org/9%20Essentials/statement.pdf.

Nolan, J., Badiali, B., Zembal-Saul, C., Burns, R., Edmondson, J., Bauer, D., . . . Wheland, M. (2010). The Penn State-State College Elementary Professional Development School Collaborative: A profile. *School-University Partnerships*, *3*(2), 19–27.

Norman, P. J., Golian, K., & Hooker, H. (2005). Professional development schools and critical friends groups: Supporting student, novice and teacher learning. *New Educator, 1*, 273–286. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ819909

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Whitney, A. E., Blau, S., Bright, A., Cabe, R., Dewar, T., Macias, R., Rogers, P., & Levin, J. (2008). Beyond strategies: Teacher practice, writing process, and the influence of inquiry. *English Education*, *40*, 201–230.

Zepeda, S. (2008). *Professional development: What works*. New York, NY: Eye on Education.

❖ ❖ ❖

Jill Corkery, Kris Hall, Jess Jeffries, Kristen Laskowski, Gail Romig, and Jennifer Tranell are teachers and current or former instructional coaches in the State College (Pennsylvania) Area School District.

Brian Peters is now principal of Summerwood Elementary School in the Humble (Texas) Independent School District.

Anne Elrod Whitney is a faculty member in the College of Education at the Pennsylvania State University.