Advancing PDS Research: Exploring a Collaborative School-University National Research Agenda

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The Need for a School-University National Research Agenda

Professional Development Schools (PDS) and School-University Partnerships (SUP) have a rich history of serving students in high-need schools, which is supported by over 30 years of research including empirical studies, historical reviews, and scholarly critiques (Abdal-Hagg, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Neapolitan & Berkeley, 2006; Neapolitan, 2011, Rutter, 2011, Breault and Brault, 2012, Snow et al., 2016, Zenkov et al., 2016, and Catelli, 2021). Although a great deal of working knowledge is available around partnership development and PDS schools, a more intentional and coordinated research effort is needed to strengthen the empirical evidence around the impact of PDS-SUP. Targeted research efforts around PDS-SUP will likely provide detailed information and strategies to help schools and universities face the many educational challenges in America today. This work aligns to Essential 5 of the Second Edition of the NAPDS Nine Essentials (NAPDS, 2021) which states that, "A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets."

The idea of crafting a national PDS-SUP research agenda conference was initiated by Georgia State University (GSU) and the PDS Research Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Education Research Association (AERA), which was later expanded to include the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS). Initially, there were seven members of an AERA-GSU Conference Planning Committee who wrote and submitted the AERA application and were responsible for developing and conducting a three-day research conference in Atlanta, Georgia: Gwendolyn T. Benson from GSU, Rebecca West Burns from the University of North Florida, Linda Catelli, Emerita from the City University of New York at Queens College, William Curlette, Emeritus from GSU, Janna Dresden from George Mason University, Joseph Feinberg from GSU, and Susan Ogletree from GSU who also serves as the principal investigator of the project. When the original project extended to include five virtual convenings, the committee increased its membership to include master and doctoral-degree students: Nurah Moffett, Yasmine Bey, Hannah Scarborough and Dia Carlis, all from GSU; and Jennifer McCorvey from the University of South Florida.

The project began in March of 2020 and was funded by a peer-reviewed grant from AERA to support education research conferences. In its original form, the project called for a three-day conference in September of 2021 to be held at GSU in Atlanta with 25 partnership scholars, practitioners and researchers invited to submit and present papers at in-person plenary sessions, and engage in working sessions to explore and begin to create a national research agenda. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic the in-person conference was postponed until September 2022, while a virtual conference was held in January 2022 instead that expanded and doubled the number of participants. Following the successful virtual conference, a series of four dynamic virtual research convenings were also organized, providing a forum for rich discussion around potential national research topics, collaboration and networking opportunities for PDS-SUP scholars from around the nation.

Over 50 researchers, scholars and practitioners from different regions of the U.S. and representing diverse perspectives participated in four of the five virtual research convenings. The individuals who have gathered for the January, February, March, and May convenings have participated in paper-presentations and opportunities to discuss their views, visions, and research for advancing PDS-SUP research with a focus on crafting a national research agenda. The overall objectives and intended outcomes of the six-part AERA-PDS-SUP conference and project are to:

- Build an initial Collaborative National PDS-SUP Research Agenda including focus topics, research questions, cross-cutting national needs and issues, and projected cross-partnership and/or regional studies and projects.
- Increase the research capacity among conference members for studying and investigating PDSs and SUPs, and for writing grants in collaboration with national associations.
- Enhance the development of the Collaboration Report and Rating-Inventory (CoRR-I) for PDSs and SUPs.
- Provide a networking platform to build relationships among participants of the conference to form national research project teams.
- Develop a proposal for a book and/or journal article(s).

The "theory of action" method, coupled with an iterative approach using multiple data sources is being used to achieve the objectives of the funded project. These data sources include 25 plenary papers, recordings of small, breakout-group discussions, notes and recordings from whole-group discussions and oral and written responses to questions from the working seminars. The Regional Educational Laboratories (REL) of the Institute of Education Sciences process for building research agendas was used to create the working seminar structure with minor alterations to meet the specific needs of PDS-SUP partnerships (see Kochanek, Lacierno-Paquet, & Carey, 2014; and Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest, 2018).

The major sources of data from the January virtual meeting included: (a) 25 papers presented at 5 plenary sessions; (b) recordings of small, breakout-group discussions; (c) notes and recordings from whole-group discussions; and (d) oral and written responses to questions from Working Seminar I. The 25 plenary papers were placed on a Google drive and available for all participants to read. A worksheet for Working Seminar I was sent to all presenters prior to and after the January convening. Working Seminar I was held toward the end of the January meeting at which time participants were asked to discuss questions and items appearing on the worksheet. In addition, an in-depth whole-group discussion took place conducted by members of the planning committee.

From a review and an analysis of the data from the January convening, the following 10 initial research themes and topics emerged. They included:

- Normalizing equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Characteristics of PDSs and SUPs
- PDS outcomes: Teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention
- PDS outcomes: P-12 student learning and achievement
- PDS outcomes: Practicing teachers
- Boundary-spanning as a role and an activity
- School-based teacher educators: Role, learning, supports and constraints
- Leadership
- Political impact
- Instruments and tools for investigating PDS partnerships

The 10 research themes and topics were then coupled with guiding questions and aligned with the second edition of the Nine Essentials of PDS recently published by NAPDS in 2021.

As part of the iterative approach, an activity known as a Knowledge Café was conducted and structured to build affinity groups or communities of interest that centered around the 10 research topics for the February virtual meeting. The Knowledge Café afforded focused breakouts, group conversations, and whole-group discussions. The conversations of each affinity group along with their written responses to questions were recorded and intended to draw upon the knowledge and experience of each member of the group. The Knowledge Café for the February convening was meant to not only build relationships among members of the group but also enhance the collective thinking and

understandings of the research topic for each group. Such understandings were expected to lead to the refinement of the research topics, questions, and possible cross-partnership/regional studies and projects for the agenda.

The refinement phase of the project began during the March convening with planned activities for Working Seminar II. Participants of the meeting were asked to join or rejoin their affinity group/topics of interest that were established during February's Knowledge Café. The Working Seminar II in March was devoted to three major activities:

- Refining research topics—making statements (or questions) of what the group is most interested in and/or clarifying the topic, or creating sub-topics.
- Formulating two to three initial or general researchable questions derived from the research topic.
- Identifying and commenting on seven cross-cutting national needs/issues for the agenda.

Participants of the meeting returned to their affinity group or joined a group to work on the first two activities. For the third activity, all participants came together to comment on the 7 crosscutting national needs/issues for the research agenda.

It is important to note that the data and information that were drawn from each of the three virtual convenings were reviewed and analyzed in relation to the objectives of the project. The data were also used to design subsequent convenings. The planning committee anticipates that use of a theory of action method coupled with an iterative approach will ultimately lead to the achievement of the overall objectives of the project.

The data and information gathered from the March and May meetings are being reviewed and analyzed during the summer and early fall of 2022. At the time of writing this article data collection was planned for meetings held virtually in August and a hybrid meeting held during September. It is our hope that this innovative series of conferences will foster greater multi-site collaboration and coordination, while ultimately leading to improved and groundbreaking research in and on PDS-SUPs. ◈

A series of four dynamic virtual research convenings were organized, providing a forum for rich discussion.

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Preparing Pre-service Teachers for edTPA Using PDS Support and Video Annotation

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Integrating PDS, Video Annotation Software, and edTPA

The use of video in teacher education programs is not new and has long been used for examining one's teaching practices (Grossman, 2005), and more recently, the use of annotation tools has allowed for the documentation of teacher self-analysis (NAPDS Essential 4), both collaboratively and with peers (Rich & Hannafin, 2009). These tools make the documentation and support of teacher self-analysis and reflection evidentiary through specific instances in the video (Heafner et. al., 2019).

Video capture can be a very useful tool in helping PSTs recognize both strengths and weaknesses in their teaching, and much research supports the use of video in helping PSTs develop critical reflective practices (Heafner et. al., 2019) during their PDS experience (NAPDS Essential 4) while working on edTPA. Initially, video capture is introduced in PDS Block classes the semesters before clinical teaching and then fully implemented during clinical teaching allowing for gradual release of responsibility. In addition, the uncertainty of the availability of quality field placements, increased accreditation and accountability requirements, and the scarcity of resources such as highly qualified university supervisors makes innovative video observations and analysis of PSTs teaching a vital tool in developing critical reflective practices about pedagogical and management decisions (GoReact, 2019).

Video has the potential to help PSTs reflect (NAPDS Essential 4) upon and notice the impact of their actions in the PDS classroom. Video allows PSTs to focus on specific components of their teaching such as the impact of pedagogical decisions and their choice of management strategies. From watching themselves teach at