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Researching PDS Initiatives to Promote Social Justice Across the Educational System

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Context, Beliefs, and Vision

Kansas State University (KSU) is a land grant institution located in a rural/agrarian region of Kansas. According to the most recent census, Kansas has experienced significant increases in diverse student populations since the early 1990s. More specifically, there have been significant increases in the Hispanic population, which is now over 300,000 people; a number that is even 10.8 percent higher than Census Bureau estimates (Pew Hispanic Center 2011). Many Kansas school districts now support Latino/a (primarily of Mexican heritage) populations ranging from 58 percent to 70 percent of their student body (Lohfink et al. 2012). Numerous states in the Midwest are experiencing similar population shifts, and these changing demographics place significant responsibility on traditionally monocultural school districts and colleges of education to rethink the methods by which we train and develop educators to effectively teach all students. These demographics provided the context for a Professional Development School (PDS) Partnership, which began in 1989 with a vision to collaboratively promote social justice and educational equity from kindergarten through college. This chapter describes the PDS social justice and equity initiatives conducted between 1989 and 2012 and the outcomes of a longitudinal study to examine the effectiveness of these initiatives.

The KSU College of Education has the largest teacher preparation program in the state and is one of the largest in the nation, graduating over 400 elementary and secondary teacher education students each year. The KSU College of Arts and Sciences includes twenty-five departments that educate teachers in the core academic subject areas in which they teach. The KSU PDS Partnership includes the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, and hundreds of teachers and administrators from twenty-two schools in three diverse districts across Kansas. Our three partner districts represent inner city, small town, and rural learning environments and include fourteen elementary, five middle, and three high school PDSs. These PDS partners have been engaged in collaborative and simultaneous K-16 reform, including efforts to address social justice and educational equity, since 1989. This reform involved restructuring KSU's teacher education program while simultaneously attempting to improve teaching and learning in K-12 schools. Simultaneous state-wide K-16 reform efforts, supported by extensive professional development for K-16 partners, have been ongoing since the partnership's inception.

The KSU PDS Partnership was based on the foundational belief that educators at all levels of schooling-kindergarten through university-face significant challenges related to a wide array of social, economic, political, and educational factors. In particular, our university and school partners have been concerned with the potential tensions that might arise between a changing student demographic and a traditionally white, female, and middle class teaching force. As educators we questioned our ability to meet the needs of our diverse students through our traditional curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices-in and across our school and university settings. We noticed growing achievement gaps in our K-12 schools that were closely marked by students' gender, race, and socio-economic background. At the same time, we witnessed what we believed was a lack of recruitment and retention initiatives focused on attracting and retaining diverse students at the university-particularly in teacher education and disparities in college access and readiness of underrepresented students across all institutions.

We determined these complex problems would require complex solutions that neither institution could tackle alone. Participants agreed that our educational system should be viewed as a continuum from kindergarten through university and that significant improvement in

one part of the educational system was not going to be possible without improvements throughout the entire system. An initial planning team of approximately ten university faculty members and over thirty K-12 teachers and administrators met for over a year from 1989 to 1990 to identify common educational challenges and establish our vision, goals, and initiatives to address these challenges.

The College of Education at Kansas State University was an early member of the Holmes Group and the initial planning team adopted the Holmes Group's vision for a PDS as a regular school working in partnership with a university to achieve the following outcomes: the development of strong learning programs for diverse students in and across both settings; practical, thought-provoking preparation for novice teachers; new understandings and professional responsibilities of experienced educators, including mentoring and teacher leadership activities; and research projects that add to all educators' knowledge about how to make schools more productive (Holmes Group 1990). Three elementary PDSs were identified in 1989 and plans were initiated to revise the elementary teacher education program at Kansas State University focusing first on science, mathematics, and technology education. Eight partnership goals were established by the initial planning team in 1990 to realize the vision for our PDS Partnership. Although three of the eight goals focused specifically on social justice and educational equity, all eight goals were necessary to simultaneously reform our educational practices to promote social justice and equity:

1. To provide professional development opportunities aligned with national and state standards
2. To provide educators with the content and pedagogical knowledge, beliefs, skills, and behaviors necessary to provide all students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be contributing citizens in a changing society
3. To encourage educators to have high academic expectations for all students and to create and evaluate teaching and learning environments to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population
4. To prepare educators to implement what is known about developing and managing effective schools that support educational excellence and equity

5. To empower educators to analyze school data, create school-wide improvement plans based on identified areas of need, conduct classroom-based research to determine the effectiveness of improvement plans, participate in decision making throughout the system and to become reflective practitioners
6. To enable teachers to develop age appropriate and relevant curriculum, appropriately use a variety of effective teaching strategies, and use various forms of performance assessments to monitor and enhance student learning
7. To increase educators' technological capabilities
8. To provide teachers with the time, resources, and support needed for planning and participating in K-16 restructuring and reform initiatives

The College of Education was invited to become one of twenty field test sites for the National Council for the Accreditation of Colleges of Teacher Education Professional Development School (NCA TE PDS) Standards Project in 1998. As a result, the PDS Partnership adopted the NCA TE PDS mission to promote the intellectual engagement and development of all stakeholders through a shared responsibility for the clinical preparation of new teachers, continuing professional development of all educators, support of children's learning, and support of practice-based inquiry directed toward the improvement of teaching and learning (NCA TE 2001). The complex integration and interdependence of all four aspects of our mission will be highlighted through the following description of several examples of our social justice and equity initiatives over the course of the partnership from 1989 to 2012.

Social Justice and Equity Initiatives

Although all Nine Essentials of a PDS, as outlined by the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS), are important to our work, the initiatives described below align best with Essential 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 responsibilities to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community" (NAPDS 2008). In a similar fashion, all five NCA TE PDS Standards provide a

foundation for our work, but the initiatives described are best aligned with Standard IV: Diversity and Equity: “PDS partners and candidates develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions resulting in learning for all P-12 students. PDS partners ensure that the policies and practices of the PDS partner institutions result in equitable learning outcomes for all PDS participants. PDS partners include diverse participation and diverse learning communities for PDS work” (NCATE 2010).

Over the course of our partnership’s efforts from 1989 to 2012, PDS teachers, administrators, and faculty members collaborated to promote the diversification of the nation’s teaching force, to improve pre-service teacher education programs, and to provide quality in-service teacher professional development to equip all educators with the skills they need to equitably teach all students. The social justice and equity initiatives described below focus primarily on the professional development opportunities provided to PDS teachers, administrators, and faculty members through the PDS partnership. These professional development opportunities helped prepare PDS partners to simultaneously reform teacher education and teaching and learning within each PDS.

Professional Development

From the first professional development day in 1990 until the most recent summer institute in 2012, a wide variety of professional development activities have been conducted for pre-service and in-service PDS teachers and administrators as well as faculty from the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences. These professional development opportunities provided novice and experienced educators with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and resources to empower them to create teaching and learning environments to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. Professional development options have included on-going school-based student teaching seminars, cooperating teacher meetings, clinical instructor meetings, faculty diversity brown bag sessions, new teacher mentoring programs, book studies, curriculum analysis and curriculum development projects, peer coaching, classroom innovations, databased decision making, and action research. This professional development allowed novice

and experienced teachers along with college faculty to reflect on their curricula, instruction, and assessment practices with peers across the K-16 educational continuum for over twenty years.

Annually, evidence of student learning from disaggregated state assessment data, in addition to teacher and undergraduate student action research data, are presented and discussed at college faculty meetings, clinical instructor meetings, PDS meetings, and during professional development sessions. Guided by the data and informed by the innovative curricular and instructional practices shared within the partnership, PDS participants analyze student growth, identify needs, reflect on current practices, and create opportunities to further enhance the teaching and learning process. For example, PDS partner school teachers and College of Education faculty members have partnered to conduct numerous action research projects to examine student learning in relation to innovative teaching and teacher preparation practices; to assess and enhance educational equity, parental attitudes, and school change; and to pilot test new science and math curricula and assessment techniques. Specific classroom innovations include differentiated instruction; Universal Design for Learning; developing nonroutine mathematical problem solving; teacher and student intern co-teaching strategies; team teaching; multi-age classrooms; and alternative assessment strategies including authentic assessment, portfolios, non-graded report cards, and student-led parent conferences.

Another opportunity proven to be particularly stimulating for participants is teacher and faculty member-led book studies. Book studies began in the 1990s with a focus on understanding and meeting the unique needs of our students. Although some book studies were conducted during the academic year, summers became the most popular time for these collaborative examinations. Books shared included *Making Content Comprehensible for English Language Learners: The SIOP Model* (Echevarria, Vogt, and Short 2004), *Changing the Faces of Mathematics: Perspectives on Latinos* (Secada and et al. [eds.] 1999), *Becoming Multicultural Educators* (Gay 2003), *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (Payne 1996), *Creating Welcoming Schools* (Allen 2007), *How People Learn* (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 2000), *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (Danielson 2007), *Integrating Differentiated Instruction + Understanding by Design* (Tomlinson and McTighe 2006), and *Fair Isn't Always Equal* (Wormeli 2006).

Additional professional development opportunities have included monthly professional development days and summer institutes (two to four weeks long) that have been offered from 1990 until the present. These additional opportunities, supported through grants, have provided stipends, release time, and summer salaries for participants. For example, as part of the summer institutes, Content, Curriculum, and Children (C3) Academies have been conducted the past ten years using state grant funds. These C3 Academies provide professional development in math, pedagogy, and equity with an emphasis placed on the analysis of student learning and the design of innovative practices. Individuals who participate in C3 Academies during the summer then conduct focused action research during the academic year to assess the impact of the innovative practices on all learners.

Peer coaching/consultation has also been a powerful tool for professional growth within the partnership. Given the research on monocultural educators' discomfort in dealing with the increasing range of diversity in their classrooms (Carr and Klassen 1997; Grant and Gillette 2006), this professional development initiative was designed to make a direct impact on both educators' level of confidence and their effectiveness in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. After much research, PDS partners identified equitable teaching strategies such as differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, sheltered instruction for English language learners, and strategies to monitor and provide equitable instructional opportunities (e.g., Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement [TESA] and Gender and Ethnicity and Student Achievement [GESA]) to share with PDS participants. During the summer institute, pairs or triads of PDS participants collaborated in the implementation and evaluation of equitable teaching strategies (such as sheltered instruction) in the courses they targeted. The university faculty and PDS teachers observed each other's use of the strategies in their classrooms and provided thoughtful feedback. Through ongoing dialogue, each member identified elements of strength and provided suggestions for improvement.

Within all these professional development efforts, both K-12 and university partners have placed an emphasis on understanding social justice issues related to race/ethnicity, cultural and linguistic diversity, exceptionalities, poverty, gender, sexual orientation, and rural and urban school needs. This comprehensive approach continues to be

essential for PDS participants to develop authentic understandings of CLD student realities at both the K-12 and university levels. As identified in the research, CLD students often have inadequate K-12 preparation and poor college integration rates which result in their high attrition from college (Alliance for Excellent Education 2009; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005; Tinto 1975, 1993; Von Destinon 1988, 1990). The need for emancipatory education is part of the ongoing discussion within the partnership. Through these initiatives, PDS participants are challenged to empower diverse students and to push against deficit perspectives and dominant discriminatory ideologies historically pervasive in schools (Delgado Bernal 2002; Ladson-Billings 1998; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995).

Future and practicing educators at all levels need to challenge their discomfort with the growing range of cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity they see among their students and identify strategies to meet the wide range of student needs. They must understand that low expectations and cultural incongruence often result in negative self-fulfilling prophecies for CLD students that they must strive to overcome (Gay, Dingus, and Jackson 2003; Monkman, Ronald, and Theramene 2005). In addition, “the education of poor children needs to be taken as seriously as the education of the rich. We need to create systems that guarantee all of the elements of educational investment routinely to all children” (Darling-Hammond 2007, p. 71). As this quote reflects, we have attempted to enhance instructional and assessment practices to ensure all children receive the education they need through studies of how people learn, content and teaching standards, and syntheses of effective teaching.

Simultaneous Reform

According to Darling-Hammond (2007), in highly developed PDS partnerships, faculty from the school and university work together to teach children and prospective teachers, to develop curriculum, to improve instruction, and to undertake school reforms. The partners actively pursue an equity agenda and confront the inheritance of tracking, poor teaching, inadequate curriculum, and unresponsive systems. This is an ideal description of what the KSU PDS partnership

refers to as “simultaneous reform.” Goodlad (1994) describes this as simultaneous renewal. The core of our social justice and equity agenda is implemented through this process of simultaneous reform.

Program Improvements

University and district partners’ earliest initiatives to address social justice and equity within the PDS partnership focused on examining individual courses to more effectively attend to the needs of diverse learners. These experiences began in 1990 with approximately forty teachers, administrators, and faculty meeting as planning teams to focus on mathematics, science, and technology within the elementary teacher education program. Teachers and faculty collaboratively explored new ideas through book studies and professional development sessions and then engaged in analyses of their own practices. They designed and implemented classroom innovations and action research to implement new strategies and to assess the effectiveness of these strategies.

Individual course analysis led to full analyses of our PDS partnerships and our teacher education program throughout the 1990s. New school programs, such as math, science, and technology after-school clubs, family math programs, and summer magnet schools were developed to provide enrichment experiences for underrepresented students. New courses and field experiences were designed and implemented within the teacher education program to more effectively prepare future teachers to meet the changing needs of all students, and recruitment strategies were initiated to entice diverse students into science and mathematics teacher education. One group of secondary PDS teachers identified injustices in school and district mathematics course enrollment patterns. As a result, the district worked to eliminate tracking procedures by identifying common high school expectations and a set of required mathematics courses for all students. Block scheduling allowed secondary schools to offer extended periods of instructional time for lower performing students as opposed to placing them in lower-track/remedial mathematics courses.

As faculty and teachers became more comfortable with the PDS partnership and their successes with course and program modifications were shared, the PDS partnership was gradually expanded to

include additional schools, districts, all subjects, and the secondary teacher education program. New courses were designed and implemented and participants began to use data-based decision making across the PDSs and teacher education program, focusing on achievement and participation gaps at all levels. Within the teacher education program, field experience requirements shifted to ensure that all teacher candidates gained hands-on experience working with diverse students during at least one of their three field experiences. Topics such as equity, social justice, privilege, and power were extensively incorporated into foundational courses. More recently, in 2011, foundations and multicultural education faculty identified a Multicultural Inquiry Group (MIG) to share resources and strategies for engaging teacher candidates in authentic discussions about these complex social issues. As a result of their early field experiences, pre-service teachers are able to make immediate connections to the classroom (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005). Students share instances where they have seen course concepts in action (such as teachers' low expectations, bullying, institutional racism, and student marginalization) (Sapon-Shevin 2008).

Once course revisions and new field experiences were in place, PDS teachers and college faculty members collaborated to develop curriculum and assessment strategies to ensure our teacher candidates were meeting the needs of diverse learners. A group of teachers and faculty worked together over several years in the early 2000s to develop a portfolio assessment system to be used across the elementary and secondary teacher education program. Teacher candidates complete this portfolio during each of three semester-long field experiences and during their final full-time, sixteen-week student teaching experience. The portfolio is designed to demonstrate candidates' abilities to meet the needs of all students. Each candidate must identify contextual factors, such as race/ethnicity, exceptionality, gender, cultural and linguistic diversity, and socio-economic factors that may impact learning for each of the students they teach. Candidates then describe adaptations and/or equitable teaching strategies designed to address each contextual factor identified. They also must identify environmental factors within the school and community—such as rural or urban environments and the presence of military families—and strategies for addressing each unique environment.

The portfolio also includes a sample of each candidate's work as she or he plans, teaches, and assesses lessons and units of study. The information documented under contextual factors must be applied to the candidate's curricular, instructional, and assessment practices. Candidates are asked to explain how they meet the needs of all students they teach as part of their lesson and unit plans, instructional approaches, and assessment techniques and how they will use student background, experiences, and context to enhance their teaching. This assignment is based on the idea that successful programs support teaching that is content-rich as well as culturally and individually responsive, providing teachers with concrete tools for learning about students' lives and contexts-tapping into what Luis Moll calls the *funds of knowledge* that exist in their homes and communities (Moll et al. 1992). Candidates are then encouraged to turn that information into resources to utilize in their lesson design and instruction (Antrop-González and De Jesus 2006; Darling-Hammond 2010).

In addition, each teacher candidate identifies two focus students with unique needs related to exceptionalities, cultural and linguistic diversity, and/or socioeconomic background. The candidate then must identify specific plans to meet the needs of these focus students. After each lesson and unit is taught, the candidate is asked to disaggregate assessment data to look for achievement gaps based on the contextual factors identified for her or his class. Assessment data also is analyzed for both of the focus students and the candidate identifies future steps to help each student achieve the desired educational outcomes. The final component of the portfolio is a reflection where each teacher candidate is expected to analyze his or her strengths and weaknesses, particularly in terms of helping each student succeed. Candidates are asked to identify professional development needed and to describe the next steps they will take to enhance their own teaching.

Recruitment and Retention

Another equally important PDS reform initiative within the teacher education program is the focused recruitment and retention of culturally and linguistically diverse teacher education candidates. Due to a rapid increase in the number of CLD students in remote southwestern Kansas, there is a significant need for educators who are highly

qualified to teach the growing English language learner and Latina/o population. The PDS partnership served as a model for developing a distance-based teacher education program in collaboration with three of the largest and most diverse districts in this region of the state. As a result of these efforts, two programs, Project Synergy and AccessUS, were designed to focus specifically on the recruitment and retention of first-generation, bilingual, Latina/o paraeducators as future teachers.

Over a five-year period from 2005 to 2010, clinical instructors, classroom teachers, and community college faculty from southwest Kansas worked during summer institutes with local PDS partners to develop and implement aspects of the PDS model in southwest Kansas. Strong relationships and established lines of communication were developed among the partners involved. In addition to learning from each other, KSU and community college faculty and the teachers from these remote districts learned a great deal from the students within the Project Synergy and AccessUS programs. PDS participants grew to understand the Latina/o paraeducators' unique experiences, to value their capacities as bilingual members of their communities, and to design programs to support their success in our teacher education programs. To date, these programs have graduated twenty-eight bilingual educators who are qualified to meet the diverse needs of ELL students in the region.

Data Sources

In order to assess the effectiveness of these systemic efforts across the partnership a longitudinal study was conducted from 1990 to 2011 to include a wide variety of quantitative and qualitative data using an evaluative case study design (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Data sources included multiple surveys and interviews of university, community college, and K-12 faculty and administrators, and observations of teaching by K-12 teachers and community college and university faculty. Numerous institutional and project documents were reviewed to substantiate which activities participants were involved in and their resulting impact. K-12 student assessment data also were used to determine the impact of project activities on learning at the district level. Both quantitative (descriptive and inferential statistics) and qualitative (content analysis, pattern analysis, and constant comparison)

techniques were used to analyze all data. Long-term observations, triangulation, and audit trails were used to increase validity and reliability (Merriam 1998; Miles and Huberman 1984). The data was organized based on participant groups-including teacher education candidates, K-12 students, and PDS participants (college faculty and K-12 teachers and administrators)- in order to define the areas of impact relative to each education setting.

Outcomes

By placing social justice and equity at the center of the partnership, we have collectively enhanced our ability to make a difference with teacher candidates, K-12 students, and PDS participants. Data indicate continuous increases in the content and pedagogical knowledge and practices of future teacher candidates as well as experienced teachers and faculty members. In addition, student achievement has increased across the PDSs while achievement gaps have narrowed demonstrating the power of simultaneous reform

Teacher Education Candidates

The achievement of teacher education candidates has continuously increased in the KSU Teacher Education Program as measured by the national teaching exams required for licensure in Kansas (the ETS Principles of Teaching and Learning [PLT] and Praxis II Academic Content Exams). KSU teacher education candidates scored higher than state and national averages on almost all exams taken in 2010-2011 (97.5 percent pass rate on the PL T and 93 percent pass rate on All Academic Content Areas). Perhaps most importantly, our candidates also demonstrated high levels of proficiency related to social justice and equity. Teacher candidates are expected to develop a “Philosophy of Education” paper over the course of their program of study that is assessed at the end of student teaching. An analysis of these scores indicated that 90.5 percent of the student teachers earned full credit for demonstrating their respect for diversity in their philosophy statements. An analysis of the “Contextual Factors” component of the student teaching portfolio indicated that 84 percent of all student teachers scored six out of six on checklist items related to knowledge of students while

80 percent earned full credit for their knowledge of appropriate adaptations and equitable teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. Scores from the “Analysis of Disaggregated Data” component of the student teaching portfolio shows that 92.4 percent of the student teachers earned full credit for their use of disaggregated student data for planning and decision-making and “Final Reflection” scores on the student teaching portfolio show that 81.4 percent of the student teachers earned full credit for the quality of their professional reflections.

Student teacher exit surveys indicated they are confident in the areas of general education, foundations of education, students and learning, content and pedagogy, planning; learning environment, instructional strategies, and professionalism. On a scale of one to six, median responses range from five to six in all thirty-nine areas assessed. One teacher candidate stated, “I feel well prepared to begin teaching in my classroom.” Within this survey, responses indicated preservice teachers agree with statements indicating they are confident in their preparation to provide “equitable instructional opportunities for diverse learners” ($\mu=5.3$), “apply multiple instructional strategies that provide instructional opportunities for diverse learners” ($\mu=5.4$), and “adapt teaching to address diverse student needs” ($\mu=5.4$).

An analysis of 170 PDS surveys, last collected in 2009, indicated that PDS administrators and cooperating teachers, along with KSU student teachers and university faculty, all agree or strongly agree with the survey statement that they “noticed positive changes in the KSU teacher preparation program as a result of the PDS Partnership.” Student teachers and university supervisors taking the same survey both agree or strongly agree that “candidates frequently work with diverse candidates as part of their teacher preparation program,” while administrators, cooperating teachers, student teachers, and university faculty all agree that they have “confidence that candidates are developing skills and knowledge needed for success as beginning teachers as a result of their involvement in the PDS Partnership.” (Copies of the surveys are available from the authors.)

In addition, over the past seven years, twenty-eight non-traditional, primarily Latina/o paraprofessionals have graduated from KSU as teachers through the distance-based teacher education program, which is based on an extension of our PDS model. Twelve non-traditional bilingual Latina/o students graduated with elementary ESL degrees in the first cohort while sixteen non-traditional (twelve

bilingual, Latina/o students) graduated from the second cohort. A survey of the first cadre of these students to graduate indicated they found the faculty and staffs caring, hands-on approach was critical to their retention.

K-12 Students

During the past ten years of the partnership, K-12 student achievement also has increased and achievement gaps have decreased in mathematics, science, and reading at all grade levels across all partner districts as measured by annual state assessments. PDS student scores on K-12 state assessments are typically higher than state averages. Gains have been greatest in mathematics, the subject that has been the focus of the greatest amount of professional development. From 2000 to 2005, state assessment results demonstrated all PDS showed gains in mathematics. The four elementary schools with the largest gains (40-66 percent) had some of the largest numbers of economically disadvantaged students. The middle school and high school with the greatest number of minority and economically disadvantaged students also had the largest increases in mathematics scores from 2000 to 2005 (36.3 percent and 16.2 percent, respectively) (see Shroyer et al. 2007 for a detailed analysis of student achievement gains from 2000-2005).

Survey results support the assertion that PDS activities enhance understanding of diverse learners and benefit students. The analysis of PDS surveys previously mentioned indicates administrators, cooperating teachers, student teachers, and university faculty agree with statements such as “the academic work of diverse students is a focus of partnership discussions” and “collaborative research included issues of student equity and diversity.” This same group of PDS participants all agree or strongly agree with the statement that they “noticed positive changes at your school as a result of the PDS Partnership” and strongly agree with the statement “PDS partnership activities enhanced equity and learning for all students.”

PDS Participants

From 2003 to 2008, a variety of surveys, actions plans, and documentation logs were collected on hundreds of PDS teachers and faculty members from the College of Education, the College of Arts and

Sciences, and partnering community colleges who participated in PDS sponsored Summer Institutes. A survey of teachers and faculty participating in the 2008 Summer Institute demonstrates these participants felt “competent” to apply “Effective Teaching,” “Curriculum Renewal,” “Standards-Based Teaching,” and “Diversity Strategies.” These categories were identified on the survey to reflect the professional development topics being conducted during this six-year period. The overall mean for the diversity items on the survey was three on a four-point scale. Ratings of comfort with “sheltered instruction,” “understanding poverty,” and “cultural awareness of multicultural/multilingual perspectives” had a mean score of three out of four while ratings of comfort with “differentiated instruction to meet special needs” had a mean score of over three out of four.

Actions plans, documentation logs, and observational data indicate these participants implemented one to three “equitable and effective teaching strategies” over this six-year period. Examples of equitable strategies include a focus on conceptual understanding; use of visual aids, differentiated instruction, and sheltered instruction; providing students with extra time and individual support; additional use of group work; and modification of assignments.

An observational study was conducted with fourteen randomly selected partnership participants including three Arts & Sciences faculty, three College of Education faculty, three community college faculty, five K-12 teachers, and fifteen pre-service teachers from the distance-based teacher education program. Trained reviewers scored videotapes of their teaching using Danielson’s *Framework/or Teaching* (Danielson 2007). All participants scored at or above a performance level of three out of four indicating a “proficient” level of teaching on the *Framework/or Teaching* rubric. Equity is a “theme” across all four domains of the rubric. The highest scores among all participants were in “Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport” and “Establishing a Culture for Learning”- both key components of an equitable learning environment.

Interview data supports the impact of PDSs’ simultaneous reform initiatives on PDS participants attempting to address social justice and equity. According to one district administrator, “It [simultaneous renewal] makes the whole system change. It makes people at once understand the priorities, but also understand the possibilities.” As a PDS clinical instructor noted, “The teamwork piece of it with the

university has been probably the biggest factor I think in creating this culture that we are out there to find best practice so that we can meet the need[s] of our kids more effectively.”

The impact of professional development on teachers has been equally profound. One teacher testified, “The professional development raised their [teachers’] efficacy ... Things that they wanted to do but didn’t know how to go about doing, it kind of inspired them that, you know what, I can be a change agent.” Another teacher stated, “I’ve learned from these various speakers how to be strong so I can risk something and try it in my classroom that’s going to then help my students, ... it’s exciting to me to see the changes and the growth in all of us.”

University faculty also benefited from professional development. A microbiology/ genetics professor stated, “It [the summer institute experience] not only made me a more compassionate teacher, it actually made me spend more time with the students than before. It takes more time, but it gives me more satisfaction about teaching because I am more interactive with students at a more personal level.” A faculty member from the College of Education noted, “The professional development on equitable teaching strategies was something I could put into my university classes. It increased my knowledge of diverse learners and my interest in other cultures and other aspects of diversity ... I have been able to build my knowledge as it relates to that [Hispanic] population, but also as it relates to gender and socioeconomic status and the larger definition of diversity.” And a mathematics professor highlighted the importance of peer interactions as a component of professional development, “[We] continue to exchange ideas ... in particular focusing on the most effective use of the limited time we have ... and [how] to reach students with varying abilities in mathematics.”

Interview data from an education faculty member also indicated the impact of simultaneous reform initiatives on her university teaching: “For the first time in my career, I had the opportunity to try to apply [my learning] ... I allowed them [students] to use their primary language, for example, on the assessments, to negotiate meaning ... and we practiced for the first time. I would go back to them and say, ‘Was this useful?’ [or] ‘What did you like about ... ?’” And a partnering community college administrator explained the impact of recruitment and retention initiatives: “We have students that would never

have been involved in becoming educators or teachers if it wasn't for this program because not only were they recruited and encouraged, there was scholarship money available.”

Summary and Implications

The examples and data shared in this chapter provide evidence that our comprehensive mission to understand and impact issues of social justice and equity within education is being achieved as the PDS Partnership continues to improve K-16 teaching and learning and enhance the teaching profession across all levels of education. The major implication of our findings is that systemic reform is achievable and the outcomes can be exceptionally rewarding. Of course, such initiatives require time, continuous effort, resources, broad-based participation of all stakeholders, and a sense of need for change. Developing human capital across the educational continuum requires a commitment to providing both support (professional development) and pressure (accountability) for all participants.

Individual action plans (see appendix 1), documentation logs, and peer collaborative mentoring feedback reports indicate that participants at all levels of the educational system implemented new, effective, and equitable teaching strategies when provided with support and pressure to do so. Early partnership efforts to encourage faculty to embrace an equity agenda, in the late 1990s, fell short due to a lack of accountability. When given the opportunity to choose improvement strategies, faculty members tended to implement general teaching strategies that did not require them to step out of their comfort zones (e.g., using wait time or a “ticket out” strategy). Later partnership efforts, starting in 2004, placed emphasis on increasing the learning outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse students, requiring participants to complete individual action plans annually. Participants used these action plans to identify and report on specific equitable teaching strategies they were implementing in their courses. These plans were then reviewed and assessed bi-annually to track progress towards meeting identified goals.

The data we have considered here indicate that within this model of support and pressure, the partnership provided continuous professional development and collaboration, giving PDS participants the

tools and support they need to effect change. At the same time, participants were held accountable for implementing and reporting on the new strategies and resulting impacts. This accountability augmented their increased awareness of the need for change, which led participants to invest the time and effort needed and to assume ownership of reform initiatives.

Ultimately, the PDS model served as an ideal vehicle to implement systemic change to ensure a more just and equitable education system, across the K- 12 through college continuum. The highly collaborative nature of effective PDS partnerships allowed for powerful relationships to develop and authentic learning to occur. Once partners established a collective vision to address issues of inequality within their schools and teacher education programs, there were endless opportunities to utilize the expertise across the partnership and to leverage the momentum built as participants realized the impact of their actions.

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Appendix 1

Individual Action Plan

Use the table below to list each task you will complete during the grant year as part of your action plan. Include for each task the resources needed, date task will be completed, and the evidence you will submit to demonstrate the task is complete. Refer to the list of essential tasks and then list the essential task and the activities you will complete to address selected project goals. **Teams must complete all essential tasks** but may not conduct activities, which address every project goal.

Project Goal	#1: Promote K-16 curriculum renewal to enhance the quality of teaching in K-12 schools, increase student achievement, and reform teacher preparation.		#2 Recruitment and retention initiatives
Task addressed (see team task sheets)	1.a Implement effective and equitable teaching strategies	1.b Participate in collaborative mentoring process, focusing on equitable and effective teaching	
Activities to be completed			
Resources needed to complete task			
Date task will be completed			
Evidence that will be used to demonstrate completion of task			