Welcome From the Co-Directors of PDS

As a co-director of the SUNY Buffalo State Professional Development School Consortium (PDS), I am often asked: “What is PDS?” My short answer: “The best innovation that ever happened to teacher education!” In reality, of course, the answer is much more complex. A PDS is a mutually beneficial collaboration and significant partnership among Institutions of Higher Education and pre-k through 12 schools. Buffalo State’s PDS has been recognized as a state and national leader in clinically rich teacher education preparation for many years. The PDS model provides students majoring in education with extensive classroom experience, based on the philosophy that teaching effectiveness is best learned through mentored immersion in the classroom. One of the most exciting attributes of the partnership is its commitment to impacting all members. Not only do college faculty, teacher candidates, school principals and mentoring teachers collaboratively explore effective teaching practices through authentic classroom practice, but they promote and encourage professional development and educational innovation. The action research conducted in the PDS schools provides a platform for scholarly activity for all partners with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. A comprehensive mission that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools drives the PDS (NAPDS Nine Essentials). Thus, teacher candidates, young learners, college faculty, principals, and mentoring teachers all benefit from the multiple opportunities to learn in the context of Buffalo State’s award winning PDS partnership. Come visit and learn for yourself, the power of PDS!

How The SUNY Buffalo State PDS Consortium Provides A Framework For Innovation And Creativity

SUNY Buffalo State’s award winning Professional Development Schools (PDS) Consortium has extended its sphere of influence for 22 years. Starting with one partner school in 1991 with a mission to support the development of new and experienced teachers through local partnerships, this Consortium now partners with more than 45 PDS sites locally, regionally, and internationally. This established framework has created the space and structure for innovation and creativity for all members of the Consortium. In line with NAPDS Nine Essentials, #4, the Consortium reflects a shared commitment for innovative and reflective practices by all participants. Through the structure of the PDS Consortium, these practices are shared, reflected upon, and partners make these ideas their own. As a result, we have a highly organized PDS Consortium structure, but each member or school individualizes for their own needs.

Responding to concerns that new standards for university faculty, teacher candidates, school leaders, practicing teachers, and children may be implemented in scripted ways, the PDS Consortium established creativity as the 2013-2014 theme. Faculty read Creativity Rising: Creative Thinking and Creative Problem Solving in the 21st Century (Puccio, et al, 2012) and then established a taskforce to consider guiding questions to explore the theories and practices of creativity. The PDS Co-directors are excited by the many innovative initiatives already in place and those that will be implemented. This newsletter highlights some of the outstanding and creative work being accomplished.
Global Book Hour

Global Book Hour is a part of Dr. Kim Truesdell’s Introduction to Literacy Course. It consists of a cohort of students and volunteers to help plan art activities, vocabulary, introductions and a read aloud for children who come Saturday mornings eager to participate. The program is hosted at the local grocery store, and is open to any children that would like to come and join. Most importantly, everyone that comes receives their own copy of the book that was read that particular week. This allows the children, and teacher candidates, to begin building their own library. The teacher candidates are expected to fill 5 distinct roles, and reflect upon each of them during the course. Besides the obvious learning of teaching and planning strategies, the teacher candidates are receiving an amazing education on culture and diversity. They learn to create meaningful lessons that meet the developmental and diversity and linguistic abilities of the children in a very non-traditional setting.

Interview with Dr. Kim Truesdell

W.A.S.H. Project

Due to its great success, GBH has recently expanded to the Westside Arts Happenings Strategies (W.A.S.H.) Project, which Dr. Truesdell describes as “...a unique GBH program. We are hosted at a Laundromat in a neighborhood of immigrants and refugees on the West Side of Buffalo. Most of the children who attend are Burmese refugees from the neighborhood. English is their second language and, I believe, besides instilling a love for reading, an awareness and appreciation of cultures, and camaraderie, we are also helping their English language and literacy development. In addition, we are introducing the children and adolescents to the notion of cultural literature, science, and fractured fairytales. Anyone interested in participating is welcome to join us Saturday mornings at King Center: Charter School. Please contact Dr. Sherri Weber for further information.

Interview with Dr. Sherri Weber

King Center Charter Book Club

King Center Charter School’s Book Club is part of Dr. Sherri Weber’s Introduction to Literacy course. Laura Thompson, King Center’s librarian, develops a theme for each week; teacher candidates use these themes to construct a lesson for a small group of 2-3 children. Every lesson includes a read aloud and various activities designed to develop literacy skills. At the end of the each week, the small groups gather to collectively complete an activity that relates to the theme of the week. Past themes have included Dr. Seuss, music, multi-
Club HoLA

Club HoLA (Hour of Latino Awareness) utilizes bilingual children’s books to promote Spanish language learning and cultural awareness. Using an immersion approach, a native speaker facilitates the group using an informal and multimodal approach. Participants include SUNY Buffalo State students and faculty who build Spanish language skills, increase knowledge about Latino culture, and explore the challenges of learning a new language. Attendees receive their own copies of the three books selected for the semester. The group meets every Wednesday. New participants are welcome!

S.T.A.R. Institute

The Students and Teachers Achieving Results (S.T.A.R.) Institute is a new opportunity for SUNY Buffalo State graduate students to make real teaching theories, concepts, and strategies. Envisioned by Dr. Jevon D. Hunter as a mutually informative, mutually beneficial partnership, the S.T.A.R. Institute connects Buff State resources with community resources at the XCEL Leadership Center, Inc. This institute allows teachers and teacher candidates to form the social relationships with students that are vital to academic achievement. Equally important, the institute gives pre-service and early service teachers the opportunity to learn about students, to learn with students, and to learn from students in a different community setting. As described by Dr. Hunter, the S.T.A.R. Institute takes the PDS concept one step further, offering rich and rewarding experiences in a learning space that is a not school. Here is where Dr. Hunter challenges us to reconsider PDS as a PDEL, Professional Development Learning Ecology, in a deliberate attempt to focus on the kinds of learning students and teachers experience together. For anyone interested in creating their own PDLE, Dr. Hunter suggests “thinking big, taking risks, letting events unfold organically, and being unafraid to make mistakes!”

Interview with Dr. Jevon D. Hunter

Service Learning

One of the first forms of service learning at Buffalo State is attached to Mary C. Cummings’ EDU 310, ‘Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School’ course. The service learning components of her courses have been around since before the designation was officially given by the college. The primary focus of the service learning is working with students of diverse linguistic backgrounds, primarily English Language Learners. Teacher candidates are immersed within the program, given authentic field experience and expected to have a focus on tutoring the students and helping them to achieve, rather than giving simple “homework completion” help. The students are placed at several local community sites that have long-running relationships with the college. I believe it is best summarized by a former student “The tutoring business us a two-way thing. You give and you get”.

Interview with Mary C. Cummings
Elementary Education Club

Buffalo State’s Elementary Education Club (EEC) meets weekly during Bengal Pause. EEC allows teacher candidates to discuss pressing issues in the field of education. The club has a strong focus on community service and gives students an opportunity to collaborate with one another and the community. In the past, EEC has participated in various collection drives and read-alouds at the local Women and Children’s Hospital downtown. Additionally, EEC has provided support for local children’s charities and its members regularly provide assistance at PDS meetings. This semester, EEC will also be teaming up with Global Book Hour, the W.A.S.H. Project, and the XCEL Leadership Center to broaden its community impact.

Interview with Dr. Dianne McCarthy

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For more information:

www.buffalostate.edu/pds
www.acronyms4teachers.wordpress.com
http://elementaryeducation.buffalostate.edu/
www.facebook.com/buffalostatepds
Are you getting the most you can out of your PDS and its Liaison Committee?

Here are some of the initiatives many of our PDS Liaison committees are currently undertaking. Please check off those that apply to your school and think about including some others. These concepts will be discussed at the spring PDS Consortium Meetings, so please bring this information with you to our next meeting. As a reminder to our newer members, the Liaison Committee (LC) is made up of the school principal or designee, at least one school faculty member, and the BSC faculty member of the PDS. Other committee members are welcome including teacher candidates, parents, and additional school partners. Thanks for your input!

1. PDS mailbox
2. PDS welcome event
3. Tour of the building for new teacher candidates
4. Regular Liaison Committee meetings – at least once each semester
5. PDS bulletin board in the school
6. Teacher candidates’ photos taken and displayed in faculty room or elsewhere
7. Announcement or information about Teacher Candidates’ arrival and activities in correspondence that goes to the faculty, administration, parents
8. LC participates in the mentor teacher selection process and placement of TCs
9. Inclusion at the faculty meetings – either in person or in discussion of PDS goals
10. TCs invited to open houses, parent conferences, professional development opportunities
11. TCs and LC and CTs collaborate to put on an event for the community, families, students, etc.
12. LC discusses best practices for all partners
13. LC attends PDS retreat and Consortium meetings
14. LC committee connects TCs with faculty, especially support staff and faculty (librarian, reading teacher, etc.)
15. LC committee connects TCs with the PTO/PTA who then welcome the TCs
16. LC committee discusses the allocation of the PDS funds
17. LC makes sure that the TCs work is highlighted on the school website or in the school newsletter
18. LC makes sure a welcome announcement is broadcast in the school of the TCs first day
19. LC discusses action research and/or writes about and/or presents this research
20. LC discusses TC progress and troubleshoots when necessary
21. LC arranges for demonstration lessons by master teachers
22. PDS thank you/good bye event
23. LC discusses how the TCs and BSC faculty can support the school and its community better
24. LC invites TCs to faculty meeting and introduces them to the school personnel
25. LC explains the sign in and out, parking, and other regulations to the TCs
26. LC shares the PDS correspondence with school faculty and administration
27. LC members run for election in the PDS Advisory Council
28. Other roles for the LC (Liaison Committee):
Toward the Definition of Powerful Child Preparation

10 Strategic partnerships are imperative for improvement in teacher preparation.

9 A powerful P-12 agenda and ecosystem of education

8 Technology applications foster high impact

7 Support embedded child preparation

6 Specific roles are designed and funded to education and the P-12 sector

5 Signatures earn in an articulate professional community

4 Partnerships prepare and problem solve

3 Ongoing professional development

2 Academic freedom is integrated throughout

1 Student learning is the core.

Best Preparation

Developmental Schools (NAPDS)

National Association for Professional Excellence

Clinically Rich Frameworks

NCATE 10 Design Principles for Clinically Rich Frameworks

1. Effective Communication

2. Comprehensive Professional Education

3. Content Knowledge

4. Pedagogical Content Knowledge

5. Professional Performance

6. Professional Conduct

7. Program Leadership

8. Program Evaluation

9. Program Improvement

10. Professional Development