Learning by doing
Make the Professional Development School District work for you.

PDS Workshop: Forming Sustainable School District and University/College Partnerships
Are you interested in learning more about the potential benefits of or strengthening a Professional Development School (PDS) partnership between your school district and your local college or university? Consider attending our annual PDS Workshop.

In this two-day workshop, faculty and administrative representatives from the University of Georgia College of Education and Clarke County School District lead participant teams through school visits (prekindergarten through 12th grade) and working sessions on how to build sustainable partnerships, create a model that serves both institutions and maximize the benefits of the PDS for all stakeholders. Participant teams are encouraged to include both school district members (principals, teachers, administrators) and university faculty and for hands-on, curricular-based learning activities. In addition, through the opportunity for increased exposure to college life, Experience UGA fosters interest in the pursuit of higher education among Clarke County students.

Continuing collaborations

Experience UGA grew out of the PDSD collaboration and is a University-wide initiative which aims to bring every Clarke County student (prekindergarten through 12th grade) to UGA’s campus every year. The work of Experience UGA is coordinated by the University of Georgia Office of Service-Learning, the Office of School Engagement in the College of Education and the Clarke County School District. Through the field trips conducted by Experience UGA, CCSD students participate in hands-on, curricular-based learning activities. In addition, through the opportunity for increased exposure to college life, Experience UGA fosters interest in the pursuit of higher education among Clarke County students.

Professional Learning: Co-teaching workshops
The PDSD focuses ongoing professional learning on the co-teaching model. The goal is that all teacher candidates (student teachers), mentor teachers and COE teacher candidate supervisors (faculty and graduate students) will participate in professional learning on co-teaching and then use the co-teaching strategies throughout the student teaching semester.

Every summer we offer foundational co-teaching workshops to 75-100 CCSD mentor teachers who will have UGA teacher candidates in addition. UGA teacher candidates, along with their university supervisors, participate in foundational co-teaching training at the beginning of each semester. Mentor teachers and teacher candidates also get to know each other better and begin co-planning during a co-teaching “pairs workshop” at school sites.

Research conducted by faculty at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota has shown that the co-teaching model of student teaching not only benefits teacher candidates and mentor teachers but results in higher K-12 student achievement. Co-teaching benefits include increased options for flexible grouping of students, enhanced collaboration skills for the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher, and professional support for both the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate.