Professors and teachers partnering to transform teaching and learning
A smart collaboration:
THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MODEL

The Professional Development School District (PDSD) model in Clarke County began with the opening of J.J. Harris Elementary Charter School as a Professional Development School in August 2009. The success of this school paved the way for a more comprehensive partnership between the Clarke County School District (CCSD) and the University of Georgia College of Education (COE). In 2011, CCSD and the College expanded their partnership to include the entire school district. Several different models were created, based on four different levels of the partnership. Currently, 11 schools are active PDS sites, with more than 500 UGA students participating in a course or field experience at PDS schools each year. Resources, success, and lessons learned are shared through an annual PDS workshop, published articles in academic journals, and through state, national, and international conferences. The partnership has been recognized as a leader in the Professional Development School field and has developed an international partnership with a PDS collaborative at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, including faculty and student exchanges.

Program mission

The mission of our partnership is to improve the quality of education for all our students through a student-centered approach that fosters:

- Engagement in learning
- Interdisciplinary understanding and problem solving
- Critical inquiry and higher-order thinking skills
- Authentic learning, connected to real-world issues
- A sense of civic responsibility

We will accomplish our mission by:

- Engaging in shared inquiry focused on teaching and learning
- Facilitating the professional development of faculty in both institutions
- Providing opportunities for clinically rich experiences in educator preparation
- Sharing our expertise to innovate and to solve problems
- Integrated decision making

PDSD AT A GLANCE

- OVER 500 UGA students participate in courses or field experiences at PDS schools each year
- 20 College of Education courses are taught on-site at schools each semester
- 8 faculty work as professors-in-residence

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP
with University of Glasgow, Scotland

“Our relationship with the University of Georgia through the development of a Professional Development School District has created the needed connections between educational practice and research — which is required to improve learning experiences for all children. Our strong working relationships have led to ‘real time’ opportunities for classroom teachers and university professors to collaborate on providing the most effective classroom instructional strategies, as well as stronger teacher preparation at the college level.”

Dr. Philip Lanoue
Superintendent, Clarke County School District

“Our local schools have become the classroom for our future teachers as well, strengthening their skills as they learn alongside top-notch professionals. The College of Education’s growing partnership with the Clarke County School District gives teacher candidates experience teaching topics such as social studies, mathematics, literature and foreign languages, blending theory with practice.”

Dr. Craig K. Kennedy
Dean, University of Georgia College of Education

Partnership vision

The Clarke County School District and the University of Georgia College of Education Professional Development School District aspires to transform education at all levels through a systemic, sustained and comprehensive partnership.
The Office of School Engagement serves as a bridge between the worlds of theory and practice in P-16 public education to improve the educational experiences of students and the professional lives of educators. The PDSD is one of the Office's essential initiatives. The Office of School Engagement also supports Experience UGA, the UGA Archway Partnership and the Teach to Learn Program. Janna Dresden is director of the Office of School Engagement.

**DISTRICT-WIDE PROFESSORS-IN-RESIDENCE**

The PDSD includes two professors-in-residence who work with schools across the entire district.

**Sally Zepeda**, professor in the lifelong education, administration, and policy department and a Fellow in the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Education and Human Development, has been the district-wide professor-in-residence for more than four years. She supported the development of the CCSD Teacher Evaluation System, developed and supported implementation of observable practices, and is now aligning the Teacher Keys Evaluation System to fit the local context of teaching and learning. Her newest book, *Job-embedded Professional Development: Support, Collaboration, and Learning in Schools*, features nine cases from the field written by CCSD central office leaders and coaches, teachers and principals.

**Allison Nealy**, clinical associate professor in the College's department of communication sciences and special education, became a district-wide professor-in-residence in 2014 with a focus on special education. Nealy supports teachers through professional learning in areas such as differentiation, co-teaching and developing student learning profiles. She provides targeted job-embedded professional learning to two high schools and four middle schools, including classroom observations and ongoing trainings.

**Prekindergarten**

**CLARKE COUNTY SCHOOLS’ EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

**Population:** 230 children

**Demographics:** More than 95 percent of the children receive free or reduced-price lunch.

**Director:** Jan Stephens is the interim director of the Office of Early Learning and serves as principal of the Early Learning Center.

**FACULTY SUPPORT:** Bridget Ratajczak of the department of communication sciences and special education is the ELC’s professor-in-residence. She assists with professional development and assessment and supervises teacher candidates. She also initiated a partnership with the State Botanical Garden of Georgia to start the school’s Nature Explorer’s Club, where UGA students teach lessons on gardening and nutrition and grow gardens with the children.

**UGA faculty also provide professional learning and support to ELC teachers on positive behavioral intervention and support, literacy and math instruction and assist with grant writing. In addition, a graduate student from the department of kinesiology teaches physical education each semester. Other activities involve professors from the department of communication sciences and special education and department of educational psychology.**

**STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:** Each semester, 25-30 undergraduate and graduate students in the Birth Through Kindergarten program are placed in classrooms for practicum and student-teaching experiences and assist with student assessments.

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** On-site courses for UGA students cover assessment, curriculum and development of young children and allow for the ELC teachers, staff and instructional coaches to make presentations to the classes.

**CONTACT US!**

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**PROFESSOR ON SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT FOR SCHOOL-WIDE ENRICHMENT**

**Meg Hines**, a lecturer in the department of educational psychology, supports schools through innovative enrichment and advanced programming. She provides professional development and leadership for a district-wide School-wide Enrichment Model initiative at elementary schools, supporting school enrichment teams and enrichment clusters. She also co-instructs a first-year service-learning seminar teaching 30 UGA students at H.B. Strowd Elementary, and collaborates with the school’s principal and teachers to establish and co-lead the school’s first Community Problem Solving team.

**Rachel Scott**, Ph.D., Lecturer, Early Learning Center

**“Having UGA students in my classroom has made a tremendous impact for me. When I create a lesson for a whole or small group, I can isolate specific skills that need more teacher directed attention and allow the UGA student to work with those students. The UGA students are prepped with a vast knowledge data base but are able to put their understandings into action in my classroom. Everyone wins.”**
Elementary schools

J.J. HARRIS ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL

Population: More than 500 children in prekindergarten through fifth grade.
Demographics: More than 92 percent of the children receive free or reduced-price lunch.
Principal: Kernona Thomas

FACULTY SUPPORT: Professor-in-Residence Bob Capuzzo of the department of educational theory and practice works closely with the administration on professional learning activities. He supervises six to 12 student teachers each semester and works with the instructional coach to align the supervision of student teachers with coaching efforts. Capuzzo also participates in instructional leadership team meetings.

Faculty in the department of language and literacy education have implemented family digital literacy programs with Latino parents, collaborating with the school’s family engagement specialist to plan the design and content of sessions in order to engage parents about online educational resources. Ongoing research on this program examines Latino parents’ perspectives and resources in their use of technology at home.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT: Approximately 25 UGA students spend two days per week in the school for their field placement, and approximately 10 students do their student teaching at the school each semester.

ON-SITE LEARNING: Faculty from three departments teach approximately 25 UGA students elementary methods courses on-site each semester. Faculty provide many opportunities for pre-service teachers to observe and learn from practicing teachers and interacting with students. For example, “Look and Learn” sessions teach observation skills. “Teaching Rounds” allow students to observe and debrief with master teachers, “Talks with Teachers” let students ask questions of experienced teachers and in “Science Centers,” students teach small group lessons to J.J. Harris students.

Fowler Drive Elementary School

Population: More than 400 children in prekindergarten through fifth grade.
Demographics: More than 95 percent of the children receive free or reduced-price lunch.
Principal: Anissa Johnson

FACULTY INVOLVEMENT: Professor-in-Residence Beth Tolley of the department of educational theory and practice supervises 10-15 student teachers and 25-30 field-experience students each semester. UGA students are actively involved in nearly every classroom, and Fowler Drive students benefit from individualized attention and small group work. Tolley regularly collaborates with teachers and administrators, and her UGA students participate in planning and professional learning together with teachers.

ON-SITE LEARNING: Tolley also teaches an elementary methods course on-site. Teachers at the school serve as guest lecturers in the on-site classes to offer insight to pre-service teachers on a variety of educational practices. An on-site educational psychology course offers UGA students the opportunity to work one-on-one with students twice a week to strengthen reading and comprehension skills. Collected data demonstrate growth in reading achievement for many of the children. Other methods courses in mathematics and reading are also taught on-site for early childhood education majors most semesters.

SPECIAL HONORS: In 2014, Fowler Drive was honored by the Georgia Department of Education as a “Reward School” — a school with the highest performance or the biggest academic gains by students in the last three years. The school was also honored as a High Flying School “Honorable Mention” at the National Youth-at-Risk Conference held in Savannah.
From left: Barrow Elementary School students enjoy extra time to read in the school’s hallway; COE teacher candidates observe a J.J. Harris Elementary Charter School teacher giving a language arts lesson during a “Teaching Round”; students collaborate on a reading assignment.

**ALPS ROAD ELEMENTARY**

Principal: Anita Lumpkin-Barnett

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** At Alps Road, faculty in the department of educational theory and practice teach a social studies methods course that includes students working in kindergarten and second-grade classrooms. Clusters of teacher candidates are also placed at the school.

**BARROW ELEMENTARY**

Principal: Ellen Sabatini

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** Barrow is involved through clusters of teacher candidates, courses and instructional technology support. UGA courses taught at Barrow have included social studies methods courses, mathematics methods courses, first-year courses focused on reading with children, and a service-learning course related to hunger issues.

**FACULTY INVOLVEMENT:** The school was the site of a two-year study, led by a faculty member and teacher researchers, that explored what it means to prepare students for civic participation in a 21st-century world.

**OGLETHORPE AVENUE ELEMENTARY**

Principal: Scarlett Dunne

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** Oglethorpe is the most recent school to join the PDSD partnership, beginning in spring 2014 when faculty members from the department of educational theory and practice and the department of language and literacy education began teaching their elementary methods classes on-site, along with supervising teacher candidates at the school.

“Other elementary schools, including Barnett Shoals Elementary, Whitt Davis Elementary and H. B. Stroud Elementary (see page 4) are also involved in the PDSD through teacher candidate placements and First Year Odyssey courses taught on-site.”

A top-notch education

College of Education students get to work with award-winning, innovative schools. Among the PDSD partnership sites:

- **Fowler Drive Elementary** was honored in 2014 by the Georgia Department of Education as a “Honor School,” a school with the highest performance of the biggest academic gains by students in the last three years.
- **Hilsman, Cole and Clarke Middle** schools are International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme schools.
- **Cedar Shoals High School** was named an Advanced Placement Honor School by the Georgia Department of Education in 2010, and The Washington Post named it one of America’s Most Challenging High Schools in 2014.
- **Clarke Central High School**’s Principal Robbi Hooker was named Georgia’s high school Principal of the Year in 2013. Clarke Central was named a Breakthrough School in 2012, a joint program of the MetLife Foundation and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The school is one of 10 in the nation chosen for making gains in academic achievement.

“One of the current buzz words in 21st century education is ‘Praxis,’ which means to embody, to practice, to realize, and to enact. The Professional Development School Model is one that has been well received at my school, Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary, and one that celebrates all aspects of what ‘Praxis’ implies. The work fulfills a complete cycle of educational pursuit: theory, planning, delivery of instruction, and assessment as veteran public school teachers, university professors, and education majors collaborate on behalf of the children of Clarke County. The result is a windfall for all concerned (the community, Clarke County School District, the University of Georgia, and most importantly, the students).”

Renee Powers
Ed.D., kindergarten teacher, Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary School

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Renee Powers
Ed.D., kindergarten teacher, Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary School

“Being a teacher at a PDS school has been immensely rewarding for not only the teacher candidates and the mentor teachers, but most importantly, the students. Having a Professor-in-Residence has been mutually beneficial for all of us. With a diverse variety of knowledgeable minds and willing hands, student achievement has greatly improved, and has also given our students some insight and excitement about becoming a college student.”

Wendy Greer
First grade teacher, Fowler Drive Elementary School
Middle schools

**CLARKE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Population:** Nearly 600 students in sixth through eighth grades. 
**Demographics:** Nearly 70 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. 
**Principal:** Tad MacMillan

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** Faculty in the department of mathematics and science education teach between 12 and 20 mathematics education undergraduates on-site. UGA students learn to focus on students’ mathematical thinking, ask questions and work with small groups. Teachers and administrators also share their expertise with UGA students on topics such as classroom management, family engagement and assessment.

Clarke Middle also offers innovative professional development in social studies, with increasing numbers of social studies teachers becoming mentors to teacher candidates. Other UGA students are involved with the school’s garden and an art education methods course is taught on-site some semesters.

**W.R. COILE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Population:** More than 650 students in sixth through eighth grades. 
**Demographics:** More than 95 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. 
**Principal:** Dwight Manzy

**FACULTY SUPPORT:** Ruth Harman of the department of language and literacy education has been a “Professor on Special Assignment” since 2013. Supported with funds from the Striving Readers grant, Harman, graduate students, and Coile literacy coaches conduct workshops for teachers on literacy and support teachers’ reading/writing strategies.

**ON-SITE LEARNING:** Harman also teaches a graduate-level class on-site focusing on content and language integration in science, English language arts and social studies. UGA students observe Coile teachers and share teaching activities and mini-lessons with teachers at the end of the semester.

**EXCHANGE PROGRAM:** Coile is also involved with a PDS program that involves a “Teacher on Special Assignment” (TOSA) exchanging responsibilities one day a week for two years with a doctoral student called a PDS Fellow. The TOSA comes to UGA to teach early childhood education majors, while the Fellow teaches English as a Second Language classes at Coile one day per week.

**HILSMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Population:** Nearly 700 students in sixth through eighth grades. 
**Demographics:** More than 75 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. 
**Principal:** Selena Blankenship

**FACULTY/STUDENT SUPPORT:** Co-Professors-in-Residence Kathy Thompson and Gayle Andrews of the department of educational theory and practice teach on-site courses, supervise interns and teacher candidates, and collaborate with Hilsman teachers and administrators. They serve on the School Improvement Leadership Team, work with teachers through ongoing professional learning, and provide opportunities for UGA students to observe many different styles of teaching and work with Hilsman students.

UGA students support Hilsman’s Dream School Initiative, volunteering over 430 hours to assist with the school’s needs outside of the classroom. Doctoral students completed 12 service-learning projects benefiting Hilsman. These topics included fifth-to-sixth-grade transitions, teacher-action research, literacy in the content areas and online parent resources. Master’s students developed a Google site for Hilsman faculty to connect content across subjects, relating content to local and global issues, and involving Hilsman students in service-learning to address those issues.

**EXCHANGE PROGRAM:** Coile is also involved with a PDS program that involves a “Teacher on Special Assignment” (TOSA) exchanging responsibilities one day a week for two years with a doctoral student called a PDS Fellow. The TOSA comes to UGA to teach early childhood education majors, while the Fellow teaches English as a Second Language classes at Coile one day per week.

**Gayle Andrews and Kathy Thompson, co-professors-in-residence**

“As a COE student, it was an honor to learn from the staff and students at Hilsman Middle School. It was wonderful to learn from real-life situations and see how teachers handled them. Being able to see how things actually happen, instead of reading it from a textbook, was invaluable in preparing me to become a teacher.”

Meganne Butler
Eighth-grade teacher at Hilsman Middle School and UGA College of Education Middle Grades Education alumna (April 2013)
High schools

CEDAR SHOALS HIGH SCHOOL

Population: More than 1,400 students in ninth through 12th grades.
Demographics: Nearly 75 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch.
Principal: Tony Price

FACULTY SUPPORT: Professor-in-Residence Sonia Janis of the department of educational theory and practice co-teaches a ninth-grade government class with a recent graduate of the UGA social studies master’s program. Within this model, Janis mentors a teacher while also collaborating with other teachers in the department on a daily basis. Principal Tony Price and Janis believe the professional development of educators, whether in a college of education or at a school, should be reciprocal, and this classroom is one attempt at creating a space for reciprocal professional development – bringing together high school students, teacher candidates, practicing teachers, school leaders and university faculty.

ON-SITE LEARNING: Janis, together with other faculty from the department of educational theory and practice, teaches a social studies curriculum and methods class on-site and supervises teacher candidates.

CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Population: Nearly 1,500 students in ninth through 12th grades.
Demographics: Nearly 75 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch.
Principal: Robbie Hooker (named Georgia’s High School Principal of the Year in 2013)

ON-SITE LEARNING: Faculty from the department of mathematics and science education teach a methods class to 15-20 mathematics education students on-site, giving them opportunities to work one-on-one with high school students in three classrooms. Social studies methods classes, taught by faculty from the department of educational theory and practice, are also taught on-site. Faculty from a variety of programs also supervise teacher candidates and participate in school-improvement meetings.

Collaboration among middle, high schools

Faculty in the department of educational theory and practice partner with the social studies teachers at Cedar Shoals High, Clarke Central High and Clarke Middle to link the pre-service teacher curriculum with the high school classes. Graduate teaching assistants ensure that the collaboration across the three schools is meaningful and responsive to the specific developmental needs of both the teacher candidates and the secondary students.
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 attending our annual PDS workshop between your school district and your local college or university? Consider or strengthening a Professional Development School (PDS) partnership for all stakeholders. Participant teams are encouraged to include both school district members (principals, teachers, administrators) and university faculty and district members (psychists, teachers, administrators) and university faculty and administrators. For more information, contact the Office of School Engagement.

Scholarship within the PDS
Faculty and graduate students collaborate with teachers and administrators to conduct research within the context of the PDS. A number of scholarly articles have been published in journals, including School-University Partnerships and The American Journal of Evaluation.

PDS work is shared at state, national and international conferences. Some examples include the American Educational Research Association conference, the Association for Middle Level Education Conference, the National Association for Research in Science Teaching and the European Conference on Educational Research in Cadiz, Spain. The PDS is actively involved in the National Association of Professional Development Schools — 14 presentations have been made at annual conferences since 2010.

Research and practice is regularly shared within our partnership through the PDS Coordinating Council, which includes CCSD teachers, principals and instructional coaches, as well as UGA faculty who work in PDS schools. All Coordinating Council members also have the opportunity to participate in an annual two-day PDSD Writing Retreat to focus on planning for and writing about a variety of inquiry projects.

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 school 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.

Continuing collaborations
Experience UGA grew out of the PDS 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.

Experience UGA field trips
- Foster a sense of excitement about higher education.
- Provide learning and leadership opportunities for UGA students.
- Provide a fun, interactive learning experience on a college campus for Clarke County students.
- Meet the curriculum goals of school and teachers.
- Bring together the community and the university.
- Happen every year at every grade level.

Rutland Academy partnership
One outgrowth of the PDSD is a partnership with Rutland Academy, a GNETS therapeutic educational setting that serves K-12 students from Clarke County and 12 surrounding school districts. Jolie Daigle, associate professor and coordinator of the school counseling program, serves as the professor-in-residence. She works on the development, implementation and assessment of a social skills curriculum and also a career development curriculum, which is aligned with the requirements of the Georgia BRIDGE Act (2010). The director of Rutland Academy is Najma Hunter.

Approximately 12 UGA school counseling students participate in a required service-learning course offered at Rutland Academy and deliver social skills and career content to students at the academy through classroom guidance units and small group sessions. Daigle is also involved in providing professional development trainings, consultation with staff, building relationships with post-secondary institutions and community agencies, and grant development.
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