



Teach to Learn: One Example of the Many PDS Partnership Programs

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I attended the first NAPDS conference this past March in Washington, D.C. Through participating in multiple sessions and speaking with other attendees, I was most struck by the various ways that school-university partnerships are imagined and implemented throughout the country. My attendance at the conference was somewhat surprising given the fact that, a mere three years ago, I had never even heard of a professional development school. True, I've been involved in education for close to ten years, but for the five years that I taught high school in San Antonio, the only interaction I had with universities was when I independently signed up for professional development opportunities, such as A.P. summer institutes.

During my first semester as a graduate student at the University of Georgia, however, I became involved in Teach to Learn, an ongoing partnership program between the university and the surrounding school district. The program was conceived in response to the Georgia legislature's request for proposals for monies from its Innovation Fund, part of the state's Race to the Top award. Teach to Learn was proposed as a program to strengthen the local district's teacher induction program and enhance school leadership capacity in mathematics and science, and in January 2012 the partnership received a two-year grant.

Teach to Learn implemented a unique triad structure involving an early career teacher, a

veteran teacher, and a newly certified preservice teacher pursuing an MAT. Through the program's support, the MAT student could complete an extensive practicum experience in the veteran teacher's classroom, which allowed the veteran teacher to coach and provide feedback to both the MAT student and the early career teacher. Multiple triads created a cohort for each type of participant, and cohorts came together in regular professional learning sessions. All participants in the program also received professional development tuned to their specific needs, as well as support to attend state and national conferences in their discipline. Teach to Learn's mission fell in line with NAPDS Essential Three: Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need. The program also yielded several valuable lessons about how best to support induction teachers and foster leadership capacity among a district's veteran teachers.

Although a professional development school district had already been in place, this partnership program brought new players to the table. I came along to serve a research function, documenting the program's innovative approach, its challenges, and its successes. I was fortunate to serve on a presentation team both at the Georgia Induction Summit and at this year's inaugural NAPDS conference. I also co-authored a chapter on the Teach to Learn Partnership Program for an edited book entitled *Newly Hired Teachers of Science: A Better Beginning* (Luft & Dubois, 2015). And lastly, I am very pleased that my work with several early career teachers

who participated in Teach to Learn is serving as a foundation for my dissertation research. These and other research endeavors connected to Teach to Learn correspond to NAPDS Essential Five: Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants.

Through my involvement with Teach to Learn, I witnessed multiple dynamic relationships formed and strengthened among teachers (both veterans and those just starting off), prospective teachers, school administrators, university faculty, and, of course, graduate students. Though this is just one program executed by a single school-university partnership, it is representative of the many sorts of partnerships that have come about because of the PDS structure. As this system continues to grow, I'm sure many more educational professionals will become aware of, and benefit from, the opportunities created through school-university partnerships.

Reference

Luft, J. A., & Dubois, S. L. (2015). *Newly hired teachers of science: A better beginning*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense.

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