The Altered Role of Experienced Teachers in Professional Development Schools:
The Present and Its Possibilities

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In the last fifteen years, since the report of The Holmes Group (1990), professional development school (PDS) has become a popular reform movement which aims to achieve school-university collaborative relationships with the dual function of improving the field experience of prospective teachers and facilitating the professional development of experienced teachers. Numerous descriptive studies document the process of developing a school-university partnership (see Antonek, Matthews, & Levin, 2005; Miller & Silvernail, 1994), and most empirical research focuses on how participating in a PDS affects the development of prospective teachers (Conaway & Mitchell, 2004; Ridley, Hurwitz, Hacket, & Miller, 2005). With a few exceptions (see Cooner & Tochterman, 2004; Yendol-Silva & Dana, 2004), not many studies focus on how the role of experienced[1] teachers changes as a result of participating in a PDS.

Evidence suggests that student teaching is one of the most influential components of a teacher education program (Richardson-Koehler, 1988), and the cooperating teacher exerts the greatest influence on a student teacher (Koerner, 1992). Therefore, it is vital to understand how the role of experienced teachers is affected by the implementation of a PDS as these individuals assume greater responsibility in the education of prospective teachers and in their own professional development. This

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paper synthesizes extant research related to the roles cooperating teachers assume under a PDS model and offers possibilities for the continued development of these roles. It first provides background on the PDS movement and describes traditional roles cooperating teachers have assumed. It then outlines organizational and personal prerequisites germane to ensuring that experienced teachers in PDSs become more intimately involved in teacher education and professional development. Positive effects as well as challenges of teachers' altered roles are described with implications for the success of future PDS endeavors.

Background of Professional Development Schools

When The Holmes Group, also known as the Holmes Partnership, proposed the Professional Development School concept, they acknowledged that they were proposing a concept that was similar to the previous school-university partnerships, like the "laboratory schools" that Dewey envisioned at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, they proposed to extend school-university partnerships in two significant ways: (1) They would include all the major stakeholders—public schools, universities, schools of education, and communities. (2) They viewed efforts at improving teaching a long-term goal, not a short-term problem that could be ameliorated by quick-fix reform initiatives (Holmes Group, 1990). The Holmes Group (1986) saw the purpose of professional development schools as transforming schools, teacher education, and the professional development of teachers. This would occur through "(1) mutual deliberation on problems with student learning, and their possible solutions; (2) shared teaching in the university and schools; (3) collaborative research on the problems of educational practice; and (4) cooperative supervision of prospective teachers and administrators" (p. 56). This framework manifests in a variety of ways, which is no surprise given that 256 NCATE accredited institutions claim PDS partnerships, most with multiple schools (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2006). Although differences exist, there are patterns across the literature which define how the role of the classroom teacher is altered as a result of making the transition to a PDS. First, it is necessary to understand the role the classroom teacher has traditionally played in teacher education.

Traditional Roles of Cooperating Teachers

Despite the impact of cooperating teachers on the development of prospective teachers, research suggests that in traditional teacher education programs, the cooperating teacher is an "ambivalent partici-

pant" (Koerner, 1992). The dubious relationship may stem from a weak link between the university and the school. One complaint of cooperating teachers is that the university has unclear or conflicting goals for what the cooperating teachers role should be (Koerner, 1992; Richardson-Koehler, 1988). Other problems may stem from a lack of understanding regarding how to provide the most beneficial learning experiences for student teachers. Often cooperating teachers are chosen for this role because they are good teachers (Sudzina & Knowles, 1993), not because they are good teacher educators (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Koerner, 1992; Sudzina & Knowles, 1993). Cooperating teachers without training in being mentors tend to assume an "apprenticeship model" (Levine, 1992) with their student teachers, allowing them to pick up the tricks of the trade either by observing the cooperating teacher or through the trial and error of experience. In mentoring the student teachers, cooperating teachers tend to focus on practical, situation-specific problems, especially classroom management issues, without encouraging reflection on the underlying assumptions of practice (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Richardson-Koehler, 1988). Researchers also suggest that cooperating teachers tend to promote "conventional" practices which often conflicts with what novice teachers learned in their coursework at the university (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Clinard et al., 1997). One of the goals of professional development schools is to create meaningful professional development programs that help practicing teachers transition into the role of teacher educators. Such a transition does not occur easily unless the partnership is carefully defined maintaining clear goals, mutually beneficial relationships, and a mindfulness to accountability structures that may impede the success of the partnership.

Professional Development Schools and Experienced Teachers

Prerequisites

In creating professional development schools, certain organizational and personal prerequisites must exist. The personal prerequisites primarily refer to the beliefs and practices of the individuals participating in the PDS. Without the organizational structures, it is doubtful the personal aspects will have the wherewithal to sustain the reforms that a viable professional development school demands. If teachers are the key to educational reform (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Elmore, 1996), then it is important that school and university structures promote good teaching. However, despite an era steeped in educational reform efforts, "the traditional culture of schooling" does not foster qualities of good teaching, exerting various pressures that impede teachers from engaging in

reflective inquiry of their own practice (Silva, 1999). A successful PDS transforms the traditional culture of schools by fostering an environment conducive to teacher development. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2001) offers the following standards for supporting professional development schools: learning community, accountability and quality assurance, collaboration, diversity and equity, and structures, resources, and roles. Because this review focuses on the changing role of experienced teachers within a successful PDS, it elaborates on the following elements consistent with NCATE and Book (1996): collaboration, time, rewards and accountability, and trust.

Organizational. One of the most salient characteristics discussed in both the empirical and theoretical research about professional development schools is the necessity of collaboration (Conaway & Mitchell, 2004; Cooner & Tochterman, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Snow-Gerono, 2005). Two groups who must collaborate who frequently have the most difficulty collaborating are school faculty and university faculty (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994). Where the university typically values theory and reflection, the public school typically values practical experience and action (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Knight, Wiseman, & Smith, 1992; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). However, for professional development schools to work, it is vital that these two groups change the ways they interact with each other. Specifically, it is vital that acknowledgement and negotiation of the other group's knowledge take place (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Holmes Group, 1990). According to Robinson and Darling-Hammond (1994), "A unifying goal of professional development schools is developing and transmitting knowledge in ways that lead to practice that is both *responsible* [sic], i.e., based on profession-wide knowledge, and *responsive* [sic], i.e., sensitive to the needs and concerns of individual students" (p. 204). They assert that reaching this unifying goal requires the collaboration of both university and school faculty and that conventional organizational structures must be altered so such collaborations can take place. In describing the history of school-university partnerships in Utah, Winitzky, Stoddart, and O'Keefe (1992) state that early attempts for such partnerships failed because they lacked the structures necessary for collaborative decision-making. Governance structures that represent all stakeholders and develop parity are vital (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2001; Roselli et al., 1999; Winitzky, Stoddart, & O'Keefe, 1992).

One component of the organizational structures necessary to foster collaboration in professional development schools is time (Darling-

Hammond, 1994; Kennedy, 1992; Levine, 1992; Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994; Whitford, 1994; Winitzky et al., 1992) as it can be a teacher's "most critical resource" (Sandholtz & Merseth, 1992, p. 315). Time is necessary in two different ways. First, as implementing and carrying out the duties of a professional development school requires classroom teachers to assume new roles, time is needed for joint planning (Levine, 1992; Winitzky et al., 1992), shared decision-making (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Levine, 1992), novice teacher mentoring (Kennedy, 1992), and group and individual reflection (Grossman, 1994; Moguel, 1997; Yendol-Silva & Dana, 2004; Zeichner, 1992). Second, time is an issue in terms of making professional development schools a long-term commitment (Holmes Group, 1990; Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994; Whitford, 1994). Many classroom teachers are accustomed to the transient nature of many educational reforms. However, for professional development schools to transform the role of classroom teachers by fundamentally changing professional development and enhancing the role of classroom teachers in teacher education, patience will be required as changing a school's culture takes time.

Another major organizational structure necessary to promote the success of professional development schools from the perspective of classroom teachers is some kind of reward structure (Holmes Group, 1990; Sandholtz & Merseth, 1992). Yendol-Silva and Dana (2004) state that the six teachers in their case study of Mountainside Elementary School participated in a professional development school for a number of reasons: they thought it would benefit children, they wanted to improve the field experience of novice teachers, or their principal offered it as an alternative to traditional teacher evaluation. Despite these reasons noted by this study, most classroom teachers already feel overburdened and under appreciated. To add to their responsibilities without taking any responsibilities away is, in essence, program suicide. The rewards for participating in an organization must outweigh the demands. For the twelve teachers in Sandolhtz and Merseth's study, the extrinsic rewards included "increased pay, power, and prestige" (p. 312), while the intrinsic rewards included increased collegiality and greater feelings of efficacy. However, the rewards that teachers valued differed. For this reason, Sandholtz and Merseth conclude that any professional development school must offer multiple means of participation so that individual teachers who find rewards in different ways will be encouraged to become involved.

Juxtaposed with rewards is the issue of accountability. As school restructuring is not "linearly planned" it is important that the questions of who and what regarding responsibilities are clear to all participants (Whitford, 1994). In a study of the Windham Partnership, a professional

development school program in Vermont which focuses on reflective teaching and multiculturalism, accountability is mentioned as a precursor to teacher reflection; the Partnership provided teachers a reason to "[come] together to talk about [their] teaching" (Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997, p. 25). However, how the four teachers in this study became accountable is unclear. As the literature on traditional student teaching supervision states that cooperating teachers complained about unclear goals, it is surprising that the issue of accountability is not more explicitly discussed in the research on professional development schools. The NCATE (2001) standards offer guidelines, but how these manifest in actual settings require examination. Given the provisions of current educational policy, specifically *No Child Left Behind*, efforts to establish or maintain a PDS must take into account the increased pressures school districts and public school teachers' experience. Well-intentioned, empirically supported goals that compete with the high-stakes assessments used to determine a school's status and funding will undoubtedly be regarded as secondary, if not irrelevant, and will surely create an atmosphere of distrust. Recognizing the goals of all constituents is the first step in negotiating these tensions.

Personal. As stated previously, the organizational structures necessary for the implementation and maintenance of professional development schools must be in place for the personal requirements to be effective. For example, a component cited consistently in the empirical studies is the existence of trust and rapport between the various participants in a professional development school, namely school and university faculty (Bromfield, 1999; Morris & Nunnery, 1994; Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994; Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997; Roselli et al., 1999). The teachers in the PDS network in Memphis felt as though the university faculty understood them and treated them as their peers. This kind of relationship took time to develop (Morris & Nunnery, 1994). In the Windham Partnership, the classroom teachers said it was very important that they be treated with respect by the university faculty. "A sense of 'we' became critical…. [It] has been key to the mentors' satisfaction with the program, and has helped form a foundation from which the mentors could successfully negotiate the challenges they encountered" (Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997, p. 4). When this kind of a relationship exists, teachers are more likely to take risks and try new things. Since professional development schools require that classroom teachers take on new roles as part of their professional development and part of taking a more active role in teacher education, it is imperative that they feel some degree of safety when they venture away from the roles to which they are accustomed.

An attitude of consensus-building is also important if professional development schools are to be successful. Clinard et al. (1997) cite the importance of cooperating teachers being "pro-reform" as a way to safeguard against the problem of mentors encouraging "conventional" practices. However, being pro-reform may be a less important belief than the teachers' and university faculty's willingness to reflect on their practice and to consider their own underlying assumptions. Knight, Wiseman, and Smith (1992) cite Goodlad (1988) in describing the three necessary components of a "symbiotic relationship" between school and university faculty. First, the collaborators must be different enough in their beliefs to induce change. Second, all groups need to feel their needs are being met by the collaboration. Third, all groups must make a commitment to satisfy the interests of the other groups. Ensuring that all voices are heard is imperative.

New Roles for Experienced Teachers

Once the organizational and personal prerequisites are in place, professional development schools have the capacity of significantly altering the role of classroom teachers. These changes have been alluded to in the previous section but will be described more explicitly here. They fall into two broad categories: teacher education and professional development, which relate to the four roles cooperating teachers should assume in a PDS according to Yendol-Silva & Dana (2004). The four roles are: teacher as decision maker, teacher as teacher educator, teacher as researcher, and teacher as political advocate.

Teacher Education. The role of teacher as decision-maker and teacher as teacher educator are integrally linked. Cooperating teachers with the sense of efficacy to reflect on and transform their own practice are more likely to develop skills as mentors who encourage novice teachers to reflect and modify their practice as necessary. After studying six teachers in an elementary PDS, Yendol-Silva and Dana (2004) concluded that teachers must have a "space" to "develop their voices as decision-makers and teacher educators" and that all constituents must "construct, navigate, and protect" these spaces (p. 138). The Holmes Group (1990) envisioned school faculty taking an active role in teacher preparation by being "formally integrated into the teacher preparation program" (p. 51). In order to become a more viable figure in the teacher education program, classroom teachers must make the transition from being classroom teachers to being teacher educators, or "mentors." To describe the role of mentors, Kennedy (1992) explains the difference between knowledge, application of knowledge, and "deliberate action."

The problem with many traditional student teacher experiences is that the cooperating teacher and/or university faculty assume a successful experience involves knowledge of content and pedagogy and the ability to apply this knowledge. However, Kennedy contends that teachers must critically analyze situations as well as knowledge. "Novices must be *transformed* [sic] into people who are inclined to critically examine their own practice and to search for ways to improve it" (p. 66). Cooperating teachers often have limited their advice to student teachers to survival and practical skills. In contrast, the goal of mentors should be to "monitor,… influence,… and infuse content into novice's deliberations" (p. 71-73) and to relate their own thought processes as decision makers questioning their own assumptions. This goal is mirrored by NCATE's belief that PDSs support teachers "through the use of an inquiry-oriented approach to teaching" (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2001, p. 1).

Although Kennedy (1992) doesn't specifically state how the role of classroom teachers should change to promote deliberate action in novice teachers, other studies provide practical suggestions that give teachers a more active role in the teacher education process than the traditional cooperating teacher-student teacher relationship. In studies of existing professional development schools, classroom teachers stated that training geared towards helping them become cooperating teachers helped them become better teacher educators. This was accomplished through workshops, summer training, and/or monthly seminars (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Miller & Silvernail, 1994; Morris & Nunnery, 1994). A number of professional development schools bridge the gap between the university and public school by having classroom teachers co-teach university courses, serve as adjunct faculty, or serve as professional development school site supervisors (Bromfield, 1999; Carnes & Boutte, 1998; Grossman, 1994; Morris & Nunnery, 1994). Less important than the method is the progress the classroom teachers make toward developing their "voice" as decision makers and teacher educators.

Professional Development. Yendol-Silva and Dana (2004) found that it is most difficult for teachers to assume the two roles dealing with professional development—teacher as researcher and teacher as political advocate. "Because many school cultures seem to protect the status quo, the goal of engaging teachers in furthering their own professional growth through renewal and inquiry offers unique challenges for the professional development school" (p. 138). In traditional professional development programs there exists what is referred to as the "deficit model" (Abdal-Haqq, 1998; Lieberman & Miller, 1992). Teachers are viewed as being

deficient in their knowledge, and outside sources are required to fill these gaps to help classroom teachers improve their practice. In contrast, successful professional development schools adopt a philosophy for professional development whereby teachers are viewed as having valuable knowledge that may be tacit or unarticulated. Therefore the goal of professional development schools revolves around the concept of experienced teachers becoming more "reflective practitioners" (Schön, 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). "The purpose of the PDS is to ground these 'theoretical' studies in the practice of teaching, engaging both experienced and beginning teachers, as well as university faculty, in the reflective analysis of their work" (Zeichner, 1992). Some studies state this reflective practice is a direct result of being more involved in the supervision of new teachers (Clinard et al., 1997; Grossman, 1994). These mentoring teachers were not just a placement for student teachers. Rather they underwent preparation to become mentors and took part in the planning of the teacher education program. This occurred through the collaboration and egalitarian relationship between the school and university faculty.

To facilitate experienced teachers' ability to be reflective practitioners and assume the teacher as researcher role, many promote the practice of teacher inquiry whereby teachers systematically investigate their own practice. In fact, both The Holmes Group (1990) and NCATE (2001) cite teacher inquiry as one of the principles by which a PDS should organize itself. Rather than classroom teachers serving as data or as the recipients of the research, researchers suggest that in a number of professional development schools, teacher inquiry is occurring successfully (Clinard et al., 1997; Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997; Snow-Gerono, 2005). The teachers in Snow-Gerono's study needed a professional learning community to safely explore the uncertainty of their practice as they shifted their roles to include an inquiry-oriented stance. The author concludes that the dialogue of the professional learning community fostered a culture of inquiry at the PDS. Similarly, in the Windham Partnership teacher research seminars helped teachers question their own assumptions and integrate "local theories" about teaching and learning with larger theories (Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997). Teachers also may take an active role in inquiry by becoming involved in school reform or school improvement planning (Knight et al., 1992; Morris & Nunnery, 1994). Moving into the teacher as political advocate stage is least documented in the research, probably because it represents the largest paradigm shift for how classroom teachers perceive their role.

Effects

The research cites a number of positive effects—affective and cognitive—that experienced teachers experience as a result of their altered role in professional development schools. Affectively, classroom teachers experience a heightened feeling of empowerment and efficacy (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Grossman, 1994; Miller & Silvernail, 1994; Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997; Sandholtz & Merseth, 1992; Yendol-Silva & Dana, 2004), increased collegiality (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Book, 1996; Grossman, 1994; Snow-Gerono, 2005) as well as decreased isolation (Miller & Silvernail, 1994; Sandholtz & Merseth, 1992), and a greater sense of professional responsibility (Book, 1996; Grossman, 1994). Sandholtz and Merseth found that teachers have a greater sense of power and status as a result of the greater decision-making authority they have in professional development schools, whereas previously, they felt as though their input was only a "token" in the decision-making process. Not only did they feel their input and their knowledge was valued, they felt as though they had the ability to impact policy. When teachers taught college classes, gave presentations at conferences, and participated in grant writing, they further felt valued and had a heightened sense of status. This research demonstrates what has been known for years. When people are given the opportunity to be successful and when they are given the opportunity to have ownership in that success, then success generally occurs. Professional development schools don't ensure that the positive effects mentioned above will occur for every classroom teacher participating. However, they do provide the framework so that these effects have a greater possibility of occurring.

The cognitive goals that The Holmes Group (1990) outline include new learning, an increase in reflection of teaching and learning, and more opportunities to be creative. The empirical studies show that, to an extent, these goals are being realized. Numerous studies cite an increase in teacher reflection in professional development schools (Clinard et al., 1997; Miller & Silvernail, 1994; Morris & Nunnery, 1994; Rodgers & Tiffany, 1997; Snow-Gerono, 2005). Clinard et al. stated that not only did teachers' reflective practices become more focused, teachers reported feeling more like teacher educators. Yendol-Silva and Dana (2004) describe a somewhat different situation. Although the six elementary teachers became more reflective when interacting with student teachers, they had trouble defining their role as teacher educators. Although "space" was created for the teachers to be collaborators in the decision making, "existing power structures made teachers struggle with how to utilize the space" (p. 138). The researchers conclude that teachers need both support and time as "they learn to politically navigate and exert influence in this newly created decision-making space" (p. 133).

Challenges and Implications

There are a number of barriers that can impede experienced teachers from becoming more involved in teacher education or furthering their own professional development in schools attempting to implement a PDS model. Overcoming these barriers means first being cognizant that they exist and then being purposeful about creating the organizational and personal prerequisites outlined earlier in this paper. The first barrier involves relationships. Even when the school and university faculty are committed to working together and all the participants respect the perspectives of the others, a common problem is that of competing goals. Whitford (1994) describe how in Louisville disagreements between the school and the university concerned conceptual issues as well as practical issues. For example the university participants philosophically disagreed with the "knowledge worker" metaphor that one of the schools included as part of their mission statement. Other conceptual differences cited by researchers involve different conceptions of reflection (Winitzky et al., 1992; Zeichner, 1992) and differing views on pedagogy, with the university faculty tending to favor constructivism and the school faculty tending to favor didactic teaching (Winitzky et al., 1992). Given the current culture of accountability with an emphasis on standardized test scores, incongruous expectations over curriculum and pedagogy likely will continue. To ameliorate the potential disconnect, some researchers conclude that it is important that initiatives are not top-down, but rather start from the inside and press outward (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Book, 1996). However, Winitzky et al. caution that "reform can be as dysfunctional bottom-up as top-down" (p. 10). To create a symbiotic relationship, communication and collaborative goal setting are imperative.

The second barrier involves the rewards and demands for classroom teachers, which have already been mentioned. These include some form of compensation, which could take the form of a reduced teaching load as time is one of the most valuable and scarce resources for classroom teachers. One aspect of time which was not discussed was the tension many teachers felt between working on PDS activities that were required by their new role and the time that they felt was taken away from their students in the classroom (Book, 1996; Grossman, 1994). However, Grossman noted that this tension was cited most by the teachers who were least involved in either the professional development school or the other school restructuring efforts.

The third barrier which prevents classroom teachers from being most effective in professional development schools revolves around the teachers themselves. As previously mentioned, some teachers may be unwilling to change their own practice (Moguel, 1997; Yendol-Silva &

Dana, 2004). Teachers who are content with the status quo are less likely to participate in efforts that alter the roles they view as satisfactory and comfortable. Before implementing a PDS, it may be wise to assess the litheness of teachers' beliefs and behaviors as well as that of university faculty. Another problem involves status within the school faculty between participants and non-participants in a PDS (Moguel, 1997). In a profession that is based on equitable structures, creating a hierarchy of teachers may turn off some potential participants.

Conclusion

This paper synthesizes research on how the role of experienced teachers changes in professional development schools against the backdrop of the general purposes envisioned for such schools and some of the problems encountered by cooperating teachers in traditional teacher education programs. The PDS model holds promise for both enhancing the professional development of experienced teachers and enabling them to collaborate in the education of prospective teachers. For the most effective partnership to exist, attitudes and structures must be in place that support all PDS participants. Even when attitudes and structures are optimal, teachers, administrators, and university faculty can be affected in dissimilar ways by contextual factors which often result in competing goals. The longevity of any PDS will depend on vigilant awareness of the divergent goals of all constituents. Furthermore, rigorous research, the kind of research called for by the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005), which explores the process and the effects of teachers' altered roles is necessary. Such research should also be extended to explore how these changes affect students. If professional development schools are to take root and become truly transformative as The Holmes Group (1990), Darling-Hammond (1994), and NCATE (2001) envision, then systematic evaluation that is available to others looking to launch or maintain a PDS will be vital to demonstrate the legitimacy of these partnerships.

Note

[1] "Experienced," "cooperating," and "classroom" teacher are used interchangeably.

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