

## **CHARTER**

### **Professional Development School Partnership**

New York City District 3  
Teachers College Columbia University

#### **Introduction**

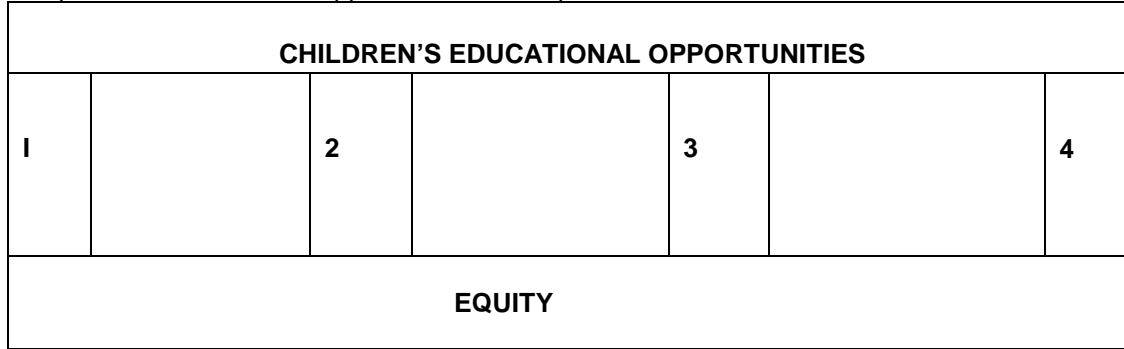
Our Professional Development School Partnership (PDS) is defined by an orientation to the nature of the collaboration between schools and universities -- valuing and acknowledging the unique talents, strengths, questions, and concerns that individuals and/or parties bring to the process. The purpose of this PDS charter is to provide our Partnership with a framework that articulates our vision, and delineates institutional and individual responsibility and accountability. This charter is fluid and subject to reflection and revision because it is intended to be responsive to the growing, evolving nature of our collaboration. It will support the work of current participants and lay the groundwork for our future work.

#### **Fundamental Beliefs**

Central to our work is a fundamental concern for students' learning, growth and development. We believe that all children can learn and that children—and the teaching of those children—are valuable and worthy of full commitment on the part of teachers, teacher educators, and administrators. We are committed to promoting urban schools and universities as inclusive communities of life-long learners. Our work is supported and defined by the following four cornerstones:

- 1- Shared responsibility for the development of pre-service and beginning teachers
- 2- The continuing development of experienced teachers and teacher educators
- 3- The creation of communities of sustained inquiry
- 4- The research and development of the teaching profession and school reform

**Figure 1: Cornerstones Beliefs:** Each column of the graphic below represents a cornerstone . The cornerstones are supported by a foundation of equity and uphold our efforts to improve the educational opportunities and experiences of all children.



The conception and interpretation of roles within this Partnership is creative and flexible. We want to foster a diverse community that provides opportunities for each individual to move thoughtfully between the various roles played out within schools and universities. The roles that we play in PDS are not determined by the positions we hold within our institutions. Rather, these roles value and acknowledge the unique talents, strengths, questions, and concerns that individuals bring to the process. These roles reflect the ideal that PDS are agents of change. For example, with the exception of roles designed to create continuity, as outlined in the “Structures” section, most roles have been designed with the kind of flexibility required to foster the strengths, interests and needs of individual participants and partner sites. PDS will support people in developing and applying their talents and strengths. We see our Partnership as a space where all people come to learn, but also as a space where all people come to teach. The value of the contributions is attached to the person and what s/he brings and not to the institutional position. The flow of collaboration is between schools and universities, and between and among schools.

We are committed to building a common culture and shared respect between schools and universities. Clear advantages of such a synthesis include a common language across issues of teaching and learning, and value for the diverse kinds of understandings and perspectives different people bring to the Partnership.

Our Partnership will be pro-active in building a common culture and shared respect with the local communities to include the voices, concerns, and strengths of families and neighborhood leaders.

Our PDS is based upon the belief that we must work toward an intellectual and compassionate community that is sensitive to issues of equity in urban education. All of our work is sensitive to race, gender, and class, sexual orientation, disability, and religion.

We understand that in order for our work to be valued, we must be both self-reflective and accountable to the members of the Partnership Community.

## Goals

Our goals described below address the cornerstones outlined in the “Fundamental Beliefs” section. In implementing these goals, each site needs flexibility to be different to develop along the continuum of needs of each student, faculty, and administrator. These goals closely reflect the goals for PDS outlined by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in recognition of the relationship between our PDS and the national PDS community.

### ***Goal 1: Learning community***

We believe our PDS should foster learning centered communities that support children and adults’ learning. Opportunities to learn are equitably supported.

### ***Goal 2: Collaboration and correspondence of responsibility***

Our PDS is characterized by joint work between schools and among school and university faculty and administrators directed at implementing our fundamental beliefs. Responsibility for learning is shared; research is jointly defined and implemented; all participants share expertise in order to support children’s and adults’ learning.

### ***Goal 3: Accountability***

Our PDS is accountable to the students in all of our education settings. PDS should be responsible to the parents, the wider community, and the teaching and teacher education professions for upholding high standards for the teaching and learning of all students, the preparation of new teachers, and the creation of communities of sustained inquiry and growth. We will weave multiple assessment structures throughout all the work that we do.

### ***Goal 4: Equity***

Our PDS views equity in three ways. First, we believe that all children should have equal access to high quality education. Second, we believe that we should work towards norms and practices which support the diverse strengths, values, and experiences brought to the Partnership by all involved. We want to make sure that we are focusing on opportunities for all members of partner sites to have access to the work done at all partner sites. Finally, we believe it is important to create both consistent and flexible structures that will enable us to examine and push forward issues of equity in substantive as well as symbolic ways.

## Institutional Commitments

Teachers College Teacher Education Programs and District 3 value, promote, and encourage our work at every opportunity. The PDS provides multiple opportunities for participants to develop their knowledge, skills and understandings related to working with diverse students in urban settings. Below we present a table (Table 1) that describes corresponding responsibilities and commitments by the university and schools.

**Table 1: Corresponding Commitments**

<b>Teachers College</b>	<b>School Partners</b>
Value PDS activities/responsibilities as an integral part of the tenure and promotion process for faculty and administrators.	Value PDS activities as an integral part of the teaching and learning process for faculty and administrators at PDS sites.
Restructure faculty and staff load: For example, define workload to include PDS work.	Restructure faculty load: Provide teachers with PDS responsibilities with release time to conduct these efforts.
PDS experience and interest in PDS involvement used as a criteria in all teacher education faculty searches.	Recruit PDS graduates for urban public schools. Give PDS graduates first priority for job interviews.
Provide pooled credits within PDS sites (following established guidelines with an annual review)	Prepare for the effective mentoring of future teachers.
Create new teaching positions for PDS school-based teachers at the university: incorporate accomplished teachers into faculty positions, such as clinical faculty, so that university students may also learn from the expertise of our PDS school based teachers.	Create a variety of roles and opportunities for PDS university-based teachers at the schools; Integrate university faculty into school forums such as faculty conferences and school leadership meetings.
Develop opportunities to engage all members of the university in the Partnership at different points in their careers.	Develop opportunities to engage all members of the schools in the Partnership at different points in their careers.
Involve the wider TC community in our work.	Create new and multiple methods for our work to impact schools across District 3 in positive and productive ways.
Support field-based research and inquiry in PDS partners and consider these activities in making personnel decisions.	Support field-based research and inquiry in PDS. (Research engaged in at PDSP sites directly impacts the practice of the participants and the lives of children.)

**Table 1: Continued**

Support the aggregate placement of student teachers and interns. Participating education departments at TC will give priority to placing student teachers first in PDS collaborating schools where appropriate placements exist. Appropriate placements will be defined by the pre-service program and by the individual schools. When possible, student teachers will be aggregated in such a way that a critical mass is achieved and supervision can be done by school-based personnel. Creative methods for supporting this model will be explored.	Support the aggregate placement of student teachers and interns by working to have multiple appropriate placements at each site.  Develop opportunities for student teachers to work with a cohort of teachers.  Develop opportunities for school-based educators to supervise student teachers.
Provide opportunities to disseminate ideas and research findings such as teacher education cross-departmental seminars, cross-school conversations. We will create several different kinds of structures such as cross-departmental seminars that will help disseminate knowledge generated within PDSP sites across the Partnership. Efforts will be made to disseminate to the educational community through publication.	Provide opportunities to disseminate ideas and research findings such as teacher education cross-school seminars and conversations. Create different kinds of structures such as cross-school seminars that will disseminate knowledge generated within PDS sites across the Partnership. Efforts will be made to disseminate to the educational community through publication and conferences.
Incorporate New York State Standards for Teaching and Standards for Learning into our research and practice.	Incorporate New York State Standards for Teaching and Standards for Student Learning into our research and practice.
Support the office of the PDS co-directors.	Support the office of the PDS co-directors.
Look for productive and thoughtful ways to involve families and communities in our work.	Look for productive and thoughtful ways to involve families and communities in our work.

## Structures

### General description of structure within specific sites

Our PDS supports both flexible and continuous (non-flexible) roles. Continuous (non-flexible) roles are institutionally supported positions and committees intended to provide the kind of continuous leadership that will allow our work to continue and grow. Flexible roles are roles and positions that change with changing needs. These roles are important to ensure that there are multiple ways for people to participate. This fluid approach to roles should translate into various activities and levels of participation that change over time, that are responsive to the goals and the four cornerstones, and to the needs of the community. It is important to continually reflect upon and revise opportunities for participation.

## Continuous Roles and Structures

### I. Partnership Wide

- ◆ A Co-Director (with faculty status at Teachers College)
- ◆ A Co-Director (with significant school-based experience in the NYC Board of Education.)

Responsibilities of the (co-) director(s) include:

Interfacing with the institutional constituencies at (1) TC:, President, Dean, TEPC, professors, students, alumni , admissions, development, employees; (2) Schools: community, directors, Principals, Superintendents, teachers, parents, development office; (3) National/international community: NCATE, Holmes

- ◆ Budgetary planning and management
- ◆ Coordination of PDS sites
- ◆ Flow of information and communication
- ◆ Facilitating roles of participants
- ◆ Overseeing documentation
- ◆ A full time (permanent and continuous) secretary

### II. School-Wide

Each individual school Partnership will be supported by (1) a Teacher Liaison and (2) a University Liaison.

- ◆ Each Liaison will receive “load credit” or compensation for this responsibility. The amount of time is flexible, and depends upon the work generated by the site
- ◆ The Principal will provide for a liaison position at each site.

The liaisons will be responsible for:

- ◆ facilitating and encouraging major PDS initiatives such as interdisciplinary team teaching, on-site seminars, curriculum development and reflection, student-centered pedagogical and curricular initiatives, collaborative teaching, reflective practice and research
- ◆ coordinating future teachers/interns (supervision of internship, co-planning of future teacher/intern experiences, managing communication between school and college regarding student teachers/interns)
- ◆ providing inquiry and teaching contacts for the utilization of partnership participants ( e.g. facilitate working together of various departments/programs at college with teaching faculty)
- ◆ yearly documentation of site-based PDS initiative

### III. Partnership Committee (the Executive Board)

- ◆ Will be constituted of the (co-) director(s), principals/administrators from each site, teacher/faculty liaison(s) from each site, representative of the Dean, representative of the Superintendent, and may also include a minimum of one teacher per school (dependent on school size), one faculty from each

program substantially engaged with PDS work, one PDS intern, and the Holmes Scholars. (ex-Officio)

- ◆ Responsibilities of the Partnership Committee are:

#### *Yearly*

- ◆ To review and provide feedback of the partner site PDS plans

#### *Quarterly*

- ◆ To be responsible for answering substantively the following questions: How are we documenting what we are doing? How is our work enabling us to meet the standards for teacher education and teaching and learning?
- ◆ To discuss the current literature about school -university collaborations and teacher education.
- ◆ Subgroups of the Board will visit partner sites for learning and feedback.

#### *Ongoing*

- ◆ Disseminate information to the Board from site colleagues and from Board to partner site.
- ◆ Represent interests of each site and constituency at Board meetings.
- ◆ Meet with on-site staff on a consistent basis to receive feedback on PDS work (each site should have a steering committee which includes Board representatives and a wider representation of site constituents). Each site will determine additional members of their PDS steering committee and how they are selected.
- ◆ Facilitate the flow of information from your site to other PDS sites
- ◆ Facilitate/lead on-site PDS meetings

#### IV. Greater Council

Greater Council is open to everyone in District 3 partner schools and the Teachers College Partnership. These meetings will be twice a year. The purpose of these meetings will be reflecting, evaluating, sharing and disseminating of partner site activities.

#### **Flexible Roles and Structures**

Examples of flexible structures and their connection to PDS cornerstones include:

##### *1. Improving school and university teaching and curriculum by supporting and developing*

- ◆ Interdisciplinary team teaching
- ◆ Thoughtful and appropriate curriculum
- ◆ Heterogeneous grouping of students, teachers and faculty

- ◆ Creative student-centered pedagogical and curricular initiatives
- ◆ Collaborative teaching and research
- ◆ Reflective practice

*II. Improving the preparation of pre-service teachers, counselors and administrators by offering*

- ◆ Opportunities to plan teach and reflect in a supported community
- ◆ Field based seminars
- ◆ Intensive practical experiences

*III. Promoting and sustaining communities of inquiry by offering*

- ◆ Opportunities to plan, teach and reflect in a supported community
- ◆ Field based seminars
- ◆ Intensive practical experiences

*IV. Promoting school renewal and school reform by promoting*

- ◆ The integration of intern and teacher learning with school instructional program
- ◆ Collegiality
- ◆ Inquiry
- ◆ The dissemination of new knowledge.

**Accountability and Documentation Practices**

At every juncture of our work, we will document and analyze how our work (1) broadens the base of participation, (2) impacts the pre-service programs, and (3) impacts students' learning. Each site will be responsible for preparing a brief document describing how they are being responsive to their own context as well as the overarching goals and cornerstones of PDS. This document will be based on the goals set by the site-based Partnership at the beginning of the year and reviewed at the end of the year. Although it will be the responsibility of the teacher and university liaison to ensure the document is written and completed, it will be viewed as whole site-based partnership initiative. Thus, each document will be generated and agreed upon by the site at large. The document will also be submitted to the Partnership Committee. This work will be done in accordance with (1) the Comprehensive Education Plan of the School and District and (2) School Leadership Teams.