

# Introduction

JANE E. NEAPOLITAN

*Towson University*

What's in a name? The title of this Yearbook, "Taking Stock of Professional Development Schools: What's Needed Now," is admittedly a play on the word *stock*. The momentum and interest for putting together this collaborative volume came about during the recent economic downturn as financial institutions crumbled and stockholders' portfolios faded into blank spreadsheets. Thus, the idea of "currency" is implied in the title, for, as many of our contributors discuss within their chapters, the professional development school (PDS) cannot and will not prevail in its present form without dedicated fiscal backing and sustained commitment for integrating the PDS effort into new structures.

But the word *stock* also conjures up connotations of abundance and quality: for example, the "stock boy" (or man or woman) at the neighborhood grocery store who takes pride in keeping the shelves packed with an assortment of foods that provide sustenance for people of all walks of life in the community, or the "stockroom" where workers have open access to tools and supplies needed to perform their jobs at the highest level. Indeed, this kind of stock, although definitely related to fiscal issues, also speaks to the quality of life within communities. As such, the past 20 years of PDS experimentation and implementation have accumulated a great wealth of stock, as evidenced by a great effort toward collaboration and commitment for school–university partnerships that support high-quality and intensive clinical preparation of teachers. Hence, our Yearbook authors closely examine and critique this stock as they assess what is in place—and perhaps what needs to be replaced—if the PDS effort should continue into the future as a "good value" and not be pushed to the back of the education shelf.

The purpose of this Yearbook is to provide a comprehensive and analytical overview of the effectiveness of the PDS endeavor based on empirical evidence since the time of the original Holmes Report, *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990). The Yearbook serves as (1) a compendium that preserves the history and development of PDS as a widely adopted model for the clinical education of teachers, (2) a resource for scholars undertaking future studies of PDS, (3) a resource for practitioners, including school-district-based practitioners and administrators, for leveraging change in the policy and practice of PDS, and (4) an evidence-based critical reflection on PDS by a panel of independent scholars for advancing the PDS endeavor to a higher level of effectiveness for teacher quality and student learning.

The Yearbook is divided into four sections that encapsulate what we know, what we don't know, and what we still need to know about the effectiveness of the PDS effort. In each section, contributors summarize the published research and/or literature on the various dimensions and issues of the PDS enterprise. At each section's conclusion, a noted scholar-practitioner offers a response chapter and a macro-level view of "what's needed now" should the PDS effort meet its full potential in the future.

Section I reviews the "History, Vision, and Approaches to Professional Development Schools." In Chapter 1, "Purpose and Vision of Professional Development Schools," Alison Rutter details the major reform agendas from decades past that set the stage for the advent of the PDS as an innovation in teacher education and school reform. This is followed by Chapter 2, "Approaches to Professional Development Schools," in which Jane Neapolitan and Marsha Levine analyze and discuss prevailing approaches to the PDS endeavor based on different interpretations according to audience, mission, and purpose for engaging in the work. Noted scholar Ken Howey, who, with Nancy Zimpher, led the Holmes Partnership as a major force for establishing school-university partnerships, concludes this section with his response in Chapter 3. Here, Howey outlines five priorities that must be set in place should the PDS effort continue as a vehicle for enabling teacher quality and school reform. He concludes his comments with a broadened and balanced interpretation of PDSs predicated on a fusion of local development and external systems of standards and support.

"Measuring the Effectiveness of Professional Development Schools" is the focus of Section II. In this section, the bulk of PDS-related research is reviewed as contributors examine the impacts of PDSs on the development of teacher candidates, the continuing professional development of teachers, and the educational success of students. In Chapter 4, Sharon

Castle and Kathleen Reilly undertake a thorough review and analysis of the “Impact of Professional Development School Preparation on Teacher Candidates.” Using Ismat Abdal-Haqq’s (1998) structural features of PDS as frame for their analysis, Castle and Reilly conclude that, based on evidence from a body of rigorous research, PDS preparation does indeed make measurable differences in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of teacher candidates.

Jim Nolan and colleagues Doris Grove, Horatio Leftwich, Kelly Mark, and Brian Peters analyze the evidence for the “Impact on Professional Development” in Chapter 5. These contributors examine the extent to which PDS partnerships provide professional development experiences for renewal and reform. They also examine the quality of the existing evidence about PDS impacts and the types of research studies still needed to accumulate high-quality evidence concerning the professional development of all educators. This function of the PDS has been pushed to the back of the shelf, while initial teacher preparation has persisted as the main focus of what was originally intended as an integrated innovation for teacher quality and school reform in a broader perspective. In addition to examining the impacts of PDS on the professional development of practicing P–12 teachers, Nolan and colleagues include a discussion of the impacts on other adults in the PDS community, including university faculty, school principals, parents, and community members. Their critique of methodological issues pertaining to the quality of research on professional development serves as an important resource and launching point for the design of future PDS studies.

In Chapter 6, Pia Wong and Ron Glass examine the connections between “Professional Development Schools and Student Learning and Achievement.” Their efforts for identifying a small but select body of research about the impacts of PDS efforts on student learning and achievement provide encouraging evidence that there *is* a connection between the PDS as intervention, and improvement in student learning and achievement. Like Castle and Reilly, these contributors also refer to Abdal-Haqq’s 1998 seminal work on the structural features of the PDS that enable student learning. Wong and Glass examine the structures of PDS that support student learning and achievement, the impact of PDS as evidenced by rigorous research design and measures, and the extent to which PDSs have a differential impact on the learning of low-income and culturally and racially diverse students.

At the conclusion of Section II, Lin Goodwin, associate dean for Teacher Education and School-Based Support at Teachers College, Columbia University, responds to this section on the impacts of PDSs in Chapter 7. She emphasizes how the PDS effort has underscored good

teaching, good teachers, and successful schools. Drawing from the evidence-based conclusions in the previous chapters about the impacts of PDSs, Goodwin discusses how the PDS effort has left an indelible mark on the professionalization of teaching.

In Section III, we turn our attention to “Professional Development Schools as Leverage for Change” from an external perspective and an internal perspective. In Chapter 8, Bernard Badiali examines the “Self-Assessment, Program Evaluation, and Renewal” of PDS partnerships as part of organizational change. He separates issues about PDS research (the quality of PDS research having been one of the major motivations for writing this Yearbook) from issues about the need for a method of PDS evaluation and accountability that will lead toward continual improvement and the renewal of partnerships. This is followed by Chapter 9, “Action Research as Primary Vehicle for Inquiry in the Professional Development School.” In this chapter, Jeanne Tunks presents the historical trends of one of the most popular approaches to inquiry in the PDS effort—action research. Since the early 1990s, action research has served as a vehicle for changing practices within the PDS. Yet, as Tunks points out, structures in schools and teachers’ workdays, as well as relationships between universities and P–12 school partners, can set barriers to the transformative potential of collaborative action research. Tunks also provides practical advice for instituting action research in the PDS at a higher level of rigor and dissemination that can enable the future of the PDS.

In Chapter 10, Linda Catelli, professor of human development and learning at Dowling College and PDS researcher and practitioner, responds to what’s needed now for researching and evaluating the PDS as an innovative organization. She provides a vision for a systematic approach to the research and development of the PDS that would benefit all partners in the PDS endeavor and the educational system at large. PDS as leverage for change is at the center of this vision.

“Sustainability of Professional Development Schools” is the critical topic of Section IV and the most pressing issue of all for the future of the PDS effort as we now know it. In this section, the contributors examine PDS accountability and governance, which, although essential to the viability of the PDS organization, are areas that have received the least attention in terms of formal documentation, dissemination, and analysis.

Supports for attaining such transformative partnerships are examined in Chapter 11, “Universities, Schools, and Communities: A New Generation of Professional Development School Roles, Structures, and Governance.” In this chapter, Carole Basile and Cindy Gutierrez examine

how roles, structures, and issues of governance help to actualize the intended purpose of the PDS partnership while making a case for rediscovering the community's critical role in PDS work. As such, redefining the PDS as a school-university-*community* partnership (which unfortunately has been forgotten even though the Holmes Group provided such a definition in 1990) takes on new meaning in the current era of increased accountability. Basile and Gutierrez, therefore, widen the vision of the PDS as a social learning space, thus opening it up to new interpretations for the future.

In Chapter 12, Diane Yendol-Hoppey and Jason Smith ask, "What Do We Know About Accountability and Resources in Professional Development Schools?" Through a review of the existing literature, the contributors review and critique PDS models that have developed collaborative accountability systems and secured resources that promote partnership sustainability. To extend their understanding of PDS accountability and resourcing, Yendol-Hoppey and Smith also conducted a national survey of PDS leadership. Based on these results, they discuss the definition of accountability within the symbiotic relationship of the PDS, connecting it to resources needed for attaining the full potential of the PDS as a transformative partnership.

Donna Wiseman, dean of the College of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park, and longtime researcher of partnerships in teacher education, responds to Section IV with "What's Needed Now: Issues of Professional Development School Accountability and Sustainability in Today's Complex Educational Environment." She discusses that although solutions and problem-solving around issues for sustaining the PDS are always changing, current realities require complicated solutions and complex problem-solving, now more than ever. Responses and solutions related to resources, accountability, and the status of teacher education must become more creative if the PDS can overcome the current context of education, P-16, and especially if it will be able to serve those communities where it can do the most good.

In conclusion, I want to thank all the authors whose time, effort, and critical reflection went into the writing of this Yearbook. Working together has taken us to a higher level of understanding about professional development schools and what's needed now for continuing the PDS effort in the future. I also want to thank the reviewers who provided thoughtful feedback and for challenging our assumptions so that we could gain a clearer view. Finally, I want to thank Lyn Corno and the staff at NSSE who kept us on track and supported us throughout the process so that we may now bring this Yearbook to you, our reader.

JANE E. NEAPOLITAN is professor and chair of the Department of Instructional Leadership & Professional Development at Towson University, where she has served as chair of the Institute for PDS Studies. Her scholarly work focuses on issues concerning the quality and sustainability of the research and evaluation of the PDS effort.