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Ashlie R. Jack

Wichita State University ashlie.jack@wichita.edu

Shirley Lefever-Davis

Wichita State University shirley.lefever@wichita.edu

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**MAKING AN IMPACT: A DESCRIPTION OF A COLLABORATIVE
PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY TEACHER PREPARATION
PROGRAM AND AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Ashlie R. Jack
Shirley Lefever**

**College of Education, Wichita State University
Wichita, Kansas**

ABSTRACT

This paper will describe an existing partnership between a university teacher preparation program and an urban school district that has a mission to jointly prepare teachers. The paper will begin with a brief overview of the development and evolution of the partnership over the years followed by a discussion of current practices and policies in the partnership that have led to positive outcomes for student learning. Specifically, the authors will describe the educator preparation program with an emphasis on the curriculum and clinical field experiences that comprise the program. The authors will share data regarding the partnership between the university and an urban school district that has had a positive and significant impact on student achievement. The authors will also focus on the final year-long field placement in the program and learn how this along with the other factors in the partnership results in teacher education candidates who are confident and highly sought after by employing school districts.

MAKING AN IMPACT: A DESCRIPTION OF A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM AND AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

As the only urban-serving state university in Kansas, Wichita State University (WSU) has a mission to be an essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good. In keeping with this mission, in 2009 the WSU College of Education (COEd) began an expansion of its existing Professional Development School program with funding from a five-year U.S. Department of Education Teacher Quality Partnership grant. Wichita State University has a long history of effective, collaborative relationships with Wichita Public Schools all of which formed the foundation for the successful design of the current WSU Professional Development School (PDS) model.

Development and Evolution of the Professional Development School Partnership

The phases of development for this partnership began in 1994 with the initial program titled Professional Development School program or PDS. Candidates applied to be admitted to the PDS program and a select group were chosen to participate in this approach to preparing future educators. This select group of candidates completed their field experience placement in one of three partnership elementary schools, Horace Mann, Irving, and Park. Three years later the PDS model was expanded to the middle and high schools that were feed into by Horace Mann, Irving, and Park. Ten years later in 2007, in collaboration with Wichita Public Schools (WPS), WSU implemented the Urban Teacher Preparation Program (UTPP) with monetary support from the school district as well as a small grant from the Kansas Board of Regents. The primary focus of the program revision at this time was to put an emphasis on preparing teacher education candidates for the urban classroom. Curriculum changes included adding course work and experiences specific to meeting the needs English Language Learners and children from poverty at the elementary grade levels. Another emphasis was identifying university liaisons who were affiliated with specific schools to develop relationships with school personnel and mentor/supervise the teacher education candidates. In 2010, the Wichita Teacher Quality Partnership (WTQP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education was awarded to WSU to scale up the UTPP program to include all grade levels as well as special education. The WTQP scope was also broadened to include recruitment of candidates through Future Educators of America (FEA) and paid internships for teacher candidates referred to as Cooperative Education. In addition, a new Early Childhood Residency (ECU) program was established for candidates wishing to teach special education in early childhood settings. Finally, the WTQP included the development of a New Teacher Induction center and professional development for preservice candidates and experienced teachers.

Now, six years later, the resulting WSU PDS program is a combination of strong curriculum and strong field experiences based on a PDS model for pre-service teacher preparation. Each aspect

of the program involves faculty/teacher collaborative teams. The PDS model to prepare urban teachers is not provided as a separate track within the College of Education, but is “the” model of teacher preparation through which all teacher education candidates are prepared. All candidates have at least two years of field experience placement and mentoring in a high-need school. They graduate with skills and knowledge of teaching, district policies and procedures, and school culture in high-need schools.

The WSU PDS program prepares teacher education candidates at the undergraduate levels for work in P-12 settings with licenses in: (1) Early Childhood Unified (Birth through grade three focuses on normally and atypically developing children) (2) Elementary Education, (3) Middle Level Education (5-8) includes (math, history comprehensive, English/language arts, and/or science), and (4) Secondary Education (6-12) includes biology, chemistry, earth and space science, physics, English/language arts, history/government or mathematics.

The model for this PDS partnership is based on research-based practices for urban teacher preparation programs. This model provides extensive field-based learning experiences for future educators with a focus of integrating learning through inquiry and in the context of practice. This model offers teacher candidates access to an expanded learning community beyond a limited textbook view.

Professional Development School Model Today and Tomorrow

The focus of the Wichita State and Wichita Public School PDS Partnership is a culture for collaboration through the leadership of both partners as well as program advisory councils. Leadership for the PDS program occurs through the PDS Leadership Team consisting of the dean of the College of Education (COEd), the department head of Curriculum and Instruction, the PDS director, administrators and faculty members from P-12 PDS settings, and faculty members from the WSU COEd. This group continues to meet regularly to monitor the program and the success of program graduates.

In addition, all licensure areas of the PDS have Program Advisory Councils (PACs) that include the teacher preparation faculty as chair, a participating district teacher/administrator, a current student, and a graduate. In consultation with its advisory council, each program advisory council committee identifies and discusses issues and makes recommendations to the Initial Licensure Teacher Preparation Committee (ILTPC). Advisory councils involve members in program design, redesign, implementation, assessment and review. The groups provide advice, input and assistance. Individual option committees confer annually with PACs as part of the program review process. In these meetings, PACS deliberate on the data, using a common set of core review questions, to make observations and potential recommendations.

Transforming Teacher Education

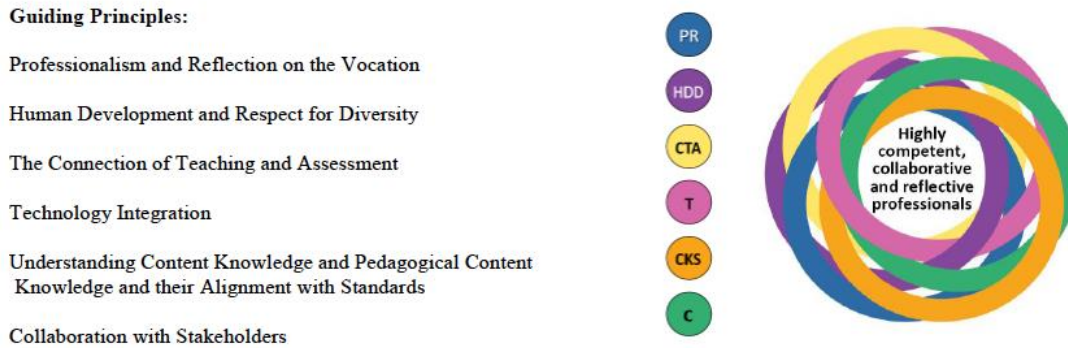
In the beginning of this partnership, the PDS program was one of two options for Wichita State candidates. It is now the sole program for all pre-service teacher education candidates (pre-baccalaureate and ECU residency program). All candidates regardless of which initial licensure program they are enrolled in, receive two full years of rich field based learning experiences in one of the 21 elementary or 15 secondary schools in WPS resulting in four semesters of field experiences in urban schools within three different school settings. In preparation for urban teaching, these placements focus on breadth, depth, diversity, coherence, and duration that focus on various characteristics in each site such as socioeconomic level of the school, ethnicity of student population, size of the school, and service to various populations of learners, English Language Learners and Special Education Students.

The program is built on the premise that effective teacher development occurs over time in conjunction with in-depth field experiences closely aligned with the teacher education and school curriculum as well as co-teaching expectations. In addition, the teacher preparation program relies heavily on established relationships between teacher educators and clinical educators that work closely together to monitor and support teacher education candidates' professional development while focusing on district initiatives, planning & preparation, culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, and professionalism.

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) Professional Education Standards (2008), based on the INTASC Standards (2007) (see Appendix A) serve as the specific program goals that inform the curriculum in the PDS program. Additionally, all candidates complete content course work specific to each individual licensure option to addresses appropriate KSDE content standards.

It is the Mission of the College of Education to prepare educators and other professionals to benefit society and its institutions through the understanding, the facilitation, and the illumination of the learning process and the application of knowledge in their disciplines. The vision is to prepare teachers and other school professionals who exemplify the core values of “Highly Competent, Collaborative, and Reflective Professionals. Six guiding principles (see Appendix B) assist with the implementation of the mission: (1) Professionalism and Reflection on the Vocation (PR); (2) Human Development and Respect for Diversity (HDD); (3) the Connection of Teaching and Assessment (CTA); (4) Technology Integration (T); (5) Understanding of Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Content Knowledge and their alignment with Standards (CKS); and (6) Collaboration with Stakeholders (C)” (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Impact of Program on Graduates and on P-12 Student Achievement



Since 2009 when the PDS model was expanded to all licensure areas, the number of WSU graduates prepared through the PDS who were hired by WPS have increased in number and the percentage of new teachers who identify as members of under-represented groups has also risen. Data also indicate an increase in the percent of new teachers retained in the WPS for the first three years of employment. As shown in the table below (Table 1), in the last five years (2011-2015) of PDS implementation, 272 WSU PDS graduates were hired by WPS. This is in spite of the substantially limited hiring by WPS in 2011-2012 due to the national and statewide economic downturn. Since 2009, Wichita Public Schools has hired over 50% of all WSU PDS teacher candidates who received a Kansas teaching license.

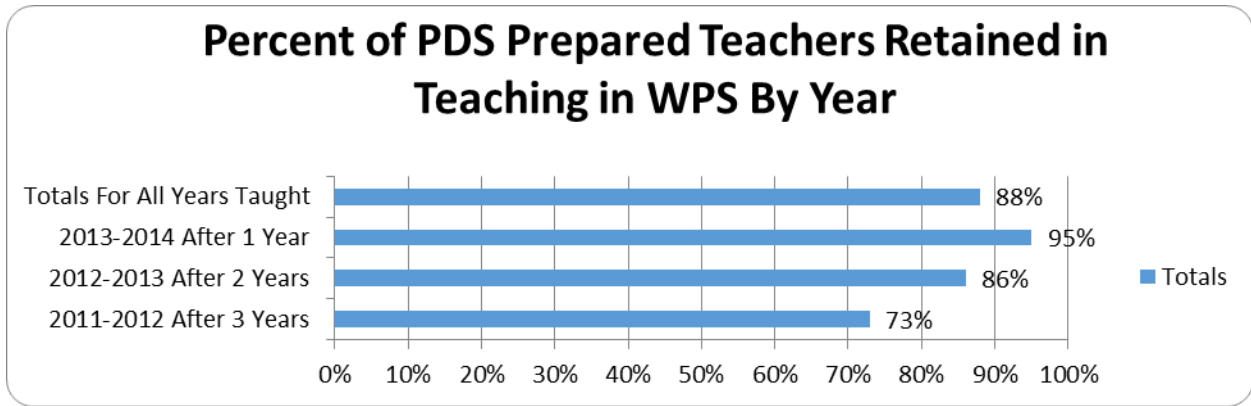
Table 1. *Number of program graduates hired in Wichita Public Schools*

	Total PDS Graduates Recommended For Licensure	Number of PDS Teachers Hired by WPS
2011-2012	87	22
2012-2013	153	87
2013-2014	165	81
2014-2015	145	82
Total	550	272

There is growing evidence that WSU PDS graduates are also staying in the field longer than traditionally prepared teachers. The benefits of these results include costs saved in recruiting and inducting new teachers and growth of a more stable teaching workforce. Data included in Table

2 indicate over 70% of WSU PDS graduates have remained in teaching after three years. At least 88% of all WSU PDS trained teachers hired since 2011 in the Wichita Public Schools have remained in the district. The COEd is maintaining data collection measures to track the retention rates of these graduates over the long term.

Table 2. *Percent of PDS Prepared Teachers Retained in Teaching in WPS by Year*



Additionally, as indicated in Table 3, the percentage of new teachers hired by WPS including those who identify as representing an under-represented group, continues to grow.

Table 3. *Percent of PDS Teachers hired by WPS representing Underrepresented Groups*

	Number of PDS Teachers hired by WPS	Percent of PDS Teachers hired by WPS members of Underrepresented Groups
2011-2012	22	23%
2012-2013	87	23%
2013-2014	81	25%
2014-2015	82	33%
Total	272	26%

Data have also been collected to determine impact of the PDS preparation on P-12 student achievement. As shown in Figure 2 below, data from student achievement exams administered in 2012 and 2013 indicate K-12 students assigned to PDS settings scored higher than three of four

comparison groups. When compared to similar groups of non-PDS prepared teachers, elementary student achievement gains were observed in math with a statistically significant difference favoring PDS sites noted in reading achievement. Moreover, when PDS schools with PDS candidate placement were compared to non-PDS schools (without PDS candidate placements), it was found that students' made larger achievement gains in PDS schools, with a statistically significant difference found in reading achievement. Due to circumstances at the state level, Kansas elementary student achievement data are available for two years only.

Figure 2. Graphic representation of PDS vs. non-PDS data between 2009 and 2011

Mean Gains in percent of students performing at or above proficient in reading within PDS and non-PDS schools from 2009-2011

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Non-PDS	0.19	16	8.10
PDS	7.26	16	9.03

H = 4.387, p<.05)

Mean Gains in percent of students performing at or above proficient in math within PDS and non-PDS schools from 2009-2011 (Full Implementation)

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Non-PDS	1.38	16	6.86
PDS	6.20	16	7.59

H=2.696, p<.05

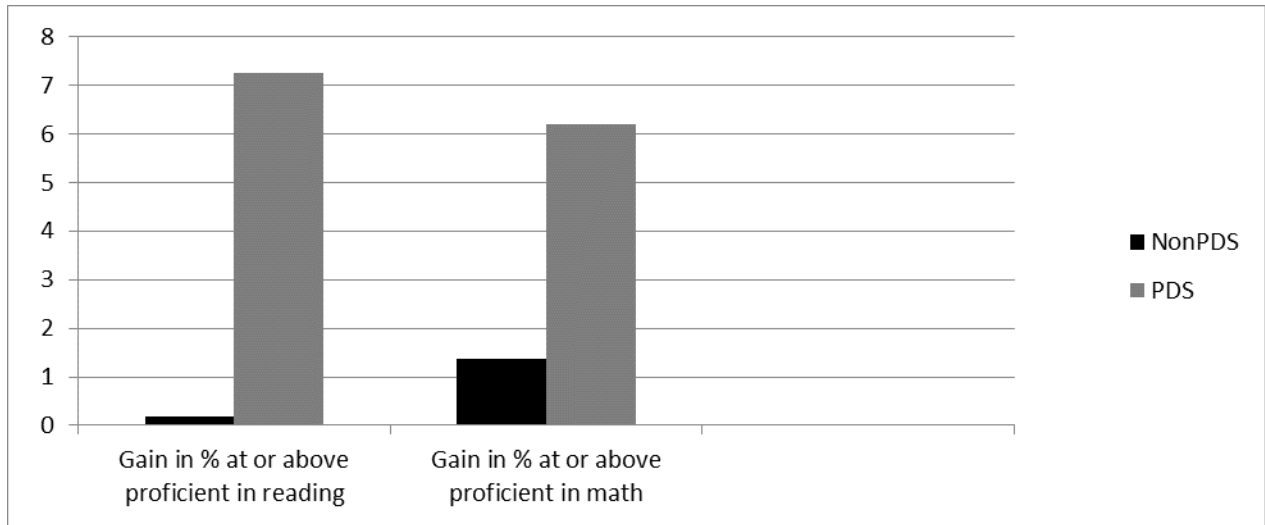
Data from the Kansas Reading and Math Assessments were collected from classrooms where graduates of the PDS program were the teacher of record during 2012 and the 2013 school years. Each year's PDS program graduates were matched with comparison non-PDS teachers hired at the same time and assigned to high need schools. Since there were not sufficient numbers of PDS teachers or comparison teachers to conduct random samples, purposive samples were drawn to match the groups on years of experience and socio-economic variables of schools in which they taught. Table 4 shows that PDS teachers' students were more likely to meet either math or reading standards in five out of six comparisons. Significance tests (t-tests) for comparison resulted in statistical significance for the 2012-2013 math comparison.

Table 4. *Impact of the PDS preparation on P-12 student achievement*

WPS Students' KSDE Reading Scores PDS settings and Comparison Group			
Teacher Group	Total Students Scored	% Scored at "Meets Standard" or above	Variance
Elementary Reading – Teachers hired in 2011 – 2012			
2012 PDS Teachers	74	78%	+9%
2012 Comparison Group	223	69%	
2013 PDS Teachers	82	71%	+4%
2013 Comparison Group	199	67%	
Elementary Reading – Teachers hired in 2012 – 2013			
2013 PDS Teachers	383	61%	+2%
2013 Comparison Group	471	59%	
Elementary Math – Teachers hired in 2011-2012			
2012 PDS Teachers	74	64%	-9%
2012 Comparison Group	222	73%	
2013 PDS Teachers	82	76%	+7%
2013 Comparison Group	198	69%	
Elementary Math – Teachers hired in 2012-2013			
2013 PDS Teachers	387	67%	+11%*
2013 Comparison Group	471	56%	

Data (Table 5) were also collected comparing Elementary Schools with and without PDS Teacher candidates on Reading and Math Achievement as shown below. Student scores (grades 3-5) in 16 PDS sites were compared to scores of students in 16 non-PDS sites, matched for similarity based on demographic criteria (e.g., size, high-need status, diversity). The findings suggest that utilizing a strong PDS model can positively impact student achievement.

Table 5. *Student Achievement in PDS vs. Non-PDS*



Summary

The WSU PDS program has been institutionalized and has strengthened the relationships between the faculties in WSU teacher preparation program and WPS education settings. University and school faculty and administrators collaborated to move beyond educational silos to truly “construct” teacher education with a goal of preparing highly competent and highly confident beginning teachers. An unplanned outcome of the PDS program has been a sense of growing respect and interdependence among the partners that has expanded the work being done to include the development of a mentor center to support the district induction program for new teachers, mentor training for cooperating teachers, professional learning opportunities for WSU and WPS PDS faculty, joint recruitment efforts, and collaboration on data collection to monitor the impact of the PDS on program completers and P-12 student achievement. In this age of public criticism for public education and higher education, the WSU PDS program is positioned to advocate loudly for effective programs nationally. As a result, the WSU and WPS Partnership has been recognized nationally.

In October 2015, the Council of Great City Schools awarded the partnership the 2015 Dr. Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award honoring an outstanding partnership between a university and an urban school district that documents positive and significant impact on student learning. This national recognition continued in 2016 when together WSU and WPS received the Association in Teacher Education Distinguished Program in Teacher Education award. This award recognizes exceptional collaboration between local education agencies and institutions of higher education as well as validation of the impact the professional development school program on student achievement and teacher preparation.

Appendix A
WSU Teacher Preparation Program Goals:
Kansas State Department of Education Professional Education Standards

Standard #1 The educator demonstrates the ability to use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of each discipline he or she teaches and can create opportunities that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for all students.

Standard #2 The educator demonstrates an understanding of how individuals learn and develop intellectually, socially, and personally and provides learning opportunities that support this development.

Standard #3 The educator demonstrates the ability to provide different approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are equitable, that are based on developmental levels, and that are adapted to diverse learners, including those with exceptionalities.

Standard #4 The educator understands and uses a variety of appropriate instructional strategies to develop various kinds of students' learning including critical thinking, problem solving, and reading.
Standard #5 The educator uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

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Standard #6 The educator uses a variety of effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

Standard #7 The educator plans effective instruction based upon the knowledge of all students, community, subject matter, curriculum outcomes, and current methods of teaching reading.

Standard #8 The educator understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continual intellectual, social, and other aspects of personal development of all learners.

Standard #9 The educator is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally, and participates in the school improvement process (Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation [QPA]).

Standard #10 The educator fosters collegial relationships with school personnel, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support all students' learning and well-being.

Standard #11 The educator demonstrates the ability to integrate across and within content fields to enrich the curriculum, develop reading and thinking skills, and facilitate all students' abilities

to understand relationships between subject areas.

Standard #12 The educator understands the role of technology in society and demonstrates skills using instructional tools and technology to gather, analyze, and present information, enhance instructional practices, facilitate professional productivity and communication, and help all students use instructional technology effectively.

Standard #13 The educator is a reflective practitioner who uses an understanding of historical, philosophical, and social foundations of education to guide educational practices.

AUTHOR NOTE

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Ashlie R. Jack, Ph.D., is an Assistant Dean/Accreditation Officer and Assistant Professor of Teacher Education at Wichita State University. Her research interests include teacher preparation, academic vocabulary, and content literacy instruction. Ashlie.Jack@wichita.edu.

Shirley Lefever, Ph.D., is the Dean of Education at Wichita State University. Her research interests include Professional Development Schools, emergent and early literacy. Shirley.Lefever@wichita.edu.