

ENHANCING SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

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ABSTRACT *Preservice teachers are offered school-based experiences as a component of their undergraduate teacher education programmes. While there have been major shifts toward establishing new types of partnerships between schools and teacher education providers internationally, in New Zealand the relationship has generally gone unexamined. New Zealand teachers, therefore, have continued as supervisors of students' experiences rather than as collaborative partners in teacher education. This study makes particular reference to the professional development school (PDS) movement in the United States of America to seek innovative ideas that might enhance school-university partnerships in New Zealand. Broader issues, however, surface as challenges and complexities are identified. Despite various criticisms there are benefits in the collaborative efforts giving cause for optimism for new types of school-university partnerships.*

Preservice teacher education programmes have traditionally offered student teachers school-based experiences as part of their undergraduate coursework. In New Zealand, established teacher education providers, both universities and colleges of education, have had well-established links with schools so that student teachers have been offered school-based experiences to develop their teaching skills. Such arrangements are not unique. As Bullough, Kauchak, Crow, Hobbs and Stokes (1997) point out, all teacher education programmes utilise some form of field experience to forge links between coursework and in-school practice.

As part of their preparation, many New Zealand student teachers have gained practical experiences in associate and normal or model schools designated to a specified teacher-education institution. The main differences between the normal and model schools and the other schools that provide a supervised practicum is that the normal and model schools include teacher education as part of their "core business" (Julian, 1997, p. iv). Student teachers are therefore regarded as part of the normal school system. Indeed, a normal school's charter may recognise commitment to teacher preparation. The presence of student teachers at the school site is likely to influence many aspects of the school's work including the recruitment of teachers, the planning of programmes and extracurricular activities (Julian, 1997). The Education Act, 1989, has continued to grant "special status" to the normal schools and the Ministry of Education sanctions any partnership arrangements between the designated normal and model schools (hereafter included in the term normal) and their university or college.

The role of normal schools in preparing preservice teachers has not been without criticism, however. The Ministry of Education Reference Group (1995) view was that normal school designations should be removed and that schools should tender to provide a service similar to that currently provided by normal schools. The suggestion was made that providers of primary teacher education could let out contracts to schools for a three-year period. In response to these recommendations a report *An Evaluation of Normal Schools in New Zealand* (Julian,

1997) was carried out by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research at the request of the New Zealand Normal School Principals' Association. Julian argued that the normal schools served a valuable and essential function from both an educational and an economic perspective and no action was taken.

Yet it remains important to raise questions about the relationship between designated schools and teacher education providers. For example, should the role of effective classroom teachers be restricted to supervising a student teacher's practicum? Supervision is important but this seems to a somewhat narrow and limiting role in the light of international trends that draw attention to a range of school-based experiences in which designated schools make a significant contribution to preservice teacher education. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that arrangements between teacher education providers and schools do not need to remain static. I would argue that the continued acceptance of a nomenclature derived from the French sixteenth century "écoles normales" representing their original teacher training function fails to enhance normal schools as collaborative partners in teacher education.

The introduction of (shortened) intensive primary teacher education programmes for graduates in New Zealand in 1997, at the Ministry of Education's behest, offered the opportunity for a shift in thinking and for new types of school-university partnership to be established. Because of their compressed time frame, programmes for graduate student teachers are generally characterised by a need to develop closer working relationships between providers and schools. Additional field experiences are considered necessary because the time frame is not long enough for student teachers to gradually accumulate the competences required for beginning teaching. Even within a three- or four-year undergraduate programme student teachers are hard-pressed to develop the full range of competences that the profession demands. McGee, McGee, Penlington and Oliver (2000) describe how the introduction of a 13-month programme offered by The University of Waikato for degree-holders resulted in both the school and the university developing a more collaborative role in the preparation of beginning teachers.

The view was held by the university that greater diversity of preservice experiences was needed to enhance "compressed" teacher education programmes. It was believed that student teachers not only needed to gain skills, they also needed to learn about the context in which their work was embedded. The normal school selected as the partnership school had served an essential if somewhat narrow function, but broader needs now required both parties to be willing to innovate and try out a new type of school-university partnership. This matter is taken up later.

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

A study of international trends showed that re-appraisals of the relationships between schools and universities and colleges of education had been initiated in recent years. In the United Kingdom, Circulars 3/84 and 24/89 (1984 and 1989) made closer links between schools and universities mandatory while in the United States, new types of school-university partnerships had evolved in the form of professional development schools. Indeed, the professional development school movement appears to have dominated ideas about the renewal of teacher education and of schools in North America (Teitel, 1998). Other studies confirm that professional development schools have become more mainstream and

increasingly recognised as alternative pathways into the teaching profession. Thus the evolution and growth of professional development schools (hereafter referred to as PDSs) seems worthy of examination. Does the PDS concept have anything of value to offer teacher education in New Zealand? With this question in mind and in the light of recent trends in teacher education it seems important to consider their potential for enhancing learning and teaching and to comment upon the part PDSs could play in instigating new types of school-university relationships.

Advocates articulate the PDS model as a system of reform and hold the vision that the PDS model will stimulate reform in both the school and the university (Darling-Hammond, 1992; Goodlad, 1988). Others, however, draw attention to complexities and challenges and argue that the PDS concept is problematic. Yet despite the difficulties identified there remains a growing interest and optimism for the role of PDSs to improve teaching environments and to enhance the personal and professional development of all participants.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL MOVEMENT

Many prominent educationists believed that the PDS concept could be a powerful vehicle for school change. The medical model of the teaching hospital, in which practitioners, researchers and clinical professors work together to expand the knowledge base of medicine, improve medical services to patients and prepare future practitioners was seen to offer opportunities for redesigned teacher preparation practices, learning environments and school-university culture (Resta, 1998). It was argued that restructuring schools and universities based upon the medical model offered the potential for re-thinking teaching and schooling (Darling-Hammond, 1994). New school-university partnerships would encourage collaboration (Darling-Hammond, Cobb & Bullmaster, 1995) and through integrating the needs of all participants learning would be enhanced (Darling-Hammond, 1995). Thus PDSs, as well as preparing novice teachers, could assist in the professional development of teachers and teacher educators (Darling-Hammond, Wise & Klein, 1995).

The debate over the new types of school-university partnerships that were to evolve in the USA in the late 1980s and early 1990s was underpinned by a number of concerns. Two highly significant reports, the Carnegie Foundation's *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986), and the Holmes Group's *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990) set the direction for education reform. Comprised of several leading educationists representing a group of research universities in the United States the Holmes Group argued for new approaches to learning, teaching and the nature of schooling and stated that dramatic changes in practice were needed because of the impact of new technology. Anxieties about the quality and life-long professionalism of teachers had surfaced. It was claimed that improved standards for the accreditation of teacher education programmes were needed. A concern was that the least experienced and least prepared teachers often taught poor and minority pupils in urban schools (Fountain, 1997). Within the wider debate the Holmes Group argued that universities needed to be better connected to schools and that schools needed to be better places in which practicing teachers could work and learn (Deer & Williams, 1995).

For over a decade John Goodlad had stressed the need for the simultaneous renewal of both schools and teacher education. In *Educational renewal: Better teachers: Better schools* (1994) Goodlad had drawn attention to the unlikelihood of

having good schools without a continuing supply of excellent teachers and had argued that more interaction between teachers and university lecturers was needed. Professional practice schools and laboratory schools had existed for traditional teacher training (Levine, 1988) but the new efforts focused upon creating new types of school-university partnerships that would provide for the renewal of schools on one hand, and of the university colleges of education on the other. The PDS concept was seen as serving as a functioning, exemplary public school in partnership with an institution of higher education. The Holmes Group believed that the new partnerships would serve three main purposes: student achievement, teacher induction and improvement of practice.

An important aspect was the promise to offer university courses on school sites and to engage the whole school, rather than a single teacher in professional development (Clark, 1990; Goodlad, 1990; Zimpher, 1990). The PDS concept promised to build and sustain educational practice through preservice and continuing professional education. It provided a unique context for thinking about and reinventing schools (Leiberman & Miller, 1990). It encouraged university lecturers and classroom teachers to determine mutual goals and provide opportunities for the renewal of schools and learning communities.

This focus challenged the traditional view of university staff committed to teaching, generating research, making presentations and publishing, and that of teachers in schools focused predominantly upon educating pupils. The PDS concept blurred the roles. The intention was for PDSs to do more than merely provide opportunities for the supervision of student teacher practice. This notion of PDSs as functioning centres for collaborative inquiry created a more diverse relationship (Million & Ware, 1997). In this relationship all participants were encouraged to enhance their learning and improve their practice (Deer & Williams, 1995). PDSs were perceived as able to serve as exemplary learning environments capable of transforming teacher preparation and children's schooling, while at the same time providing opportunities for research and reflection. Interestingly, advocates did not perceive the diversity as problematic.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

A study of the literature suggests that there is no single PDS model. While stating that student teacher preparation involves experienced teachers and teacher educators, Deer and Williams (1995) conclude that the concept of the professional development school is so vaguely defined that it cannot be generalised. Murrell (1998) describes PDSs as essentially elementary, middle, or high schools in which university staff have agreed cooperatively to develop the capacities of all educators associated with the school. Abdal-Haqq (1988) supports the notion of PDSs as schools working in collaboration with a university towards improving teaching and learning at the school.

The PDS concept has encouraged diversity in practice and although not every school can be or should be a PDS there appear to be some common characteristics. Most authors comment upon collaboration, research, professional development and administrative change, exemplary models, and the integration of technology into the curriculum as distinctive qualities that may be applied to PDSs. However, they do note that not all these characteristics may be applied to all PDSs.

There is a strong consensus of opinion that *collaboration* is the most important characteristic. All authors agree that the new approaches to learning, teaching and

management must be pursued in a collaborative manner with teachers and university staff sharing mutual planning, decision-making and teaching.

A second characteristic is a strong commitment to *research and experimentation*. PDSs should offer opportunities for all participants to rethink practice, experiment and expand the knowledge base of the profession. Teachers are viewed as professionals who constantly search for new and better ways of doing things and who engage in solving problems that they as practitioners face. The role of university staff is to support inquiry that is school-based and "naturalistic". Investigations therefore should be descriptive, and based on case study and social anthropological approaches (McIntire, 1995).

Advocates generally believe that new types of partnerships, where they genuinely exist, are characterised by their *contribution to the development of the teaching profession*. Societal changes require schools to be adaptive and responsive and therefore hierarchical structures may need to give way to collegial and cooperative forms of leadership. A trusting partnership rather than a traditional "top-bottom" management style may be critical to the effectiveness of the PDSs.

PDSs should be places where future teachers teach children from diverse cultural backgrounds and who are economically disadvantaged (Deer & Williams, 1995; McIntire, 1995). Therefore, PDSs should be characterised by commitment to *overcoming educational and social inequality*. Teaching and learning should be organised so that the needs of *all* children are addressed. In addition, people from minorities should be encouraged to enter the teaching profession.

Future teachers should be immersed in exemplary schools. Therefore, PDSs should be committed to being *exemplary models* for other schools. They should aim to provide new models of teacher education and exemplars of practice. They should be places where university partners can help shape quality programmes that are models of learning, inquiry, reflection, innovation and professionalism (McIntire, 1995).

Finally, the *integration of technology into school curricula* is considered highly significant in developing new types of partnerships. Some educationists argue that PDSs should lead the way in determining ways of using the new technology (McIntire, 1995; Resta, 1998), saying that technology, because it emphasises learning through facilitation and collaboration, is a catalyst for change in schools and universities. As most participants have limited knowledge and skills, the demand to come into the technological age can create a climate where teachers, university staff and students feel safe to be learners together. Resta (1998) hints that financial grants for resources and training were particularly important in the early stages of establishing the PDSs as large numbers of teachers and university staff needed to upgrade their skills and enhance their knowledge of learning strategies, curriculum development, assessment and classroom management.

However, as Myers (1996) points out, many PDSs have not incorporated these characteristics. Indeed, after a decade of talk about field-based teacher preparation programmes, there are still only a few hundred PDSs in the United States. Moreover, the variety is such that no two are the same. In practice PDSs appear to come in numerous forms and sizes, from true innovations to those that are nothing more than name changes for traditional student teaching. While there was a shared understanding and agreement about the purpose for the PDSs, diversity has been considered more appropriate (Kochan, 1996). McIntire (1995) agrees. PDSs should not be the same because of the assumptions that underpinned the rationale for developing them.

CAUTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In spite of strong commitment to new types of partnerships, important issues and challenges have arisen for those involved in establishing PDS partnerships. Scholars have begun to take a more sobering view (Abdul-Haqq, 1998). Problems seem to relate mostly to bringing university staff and classroom teachers together. Difficulties most frequently mentioned are linked to time requirements related to tasks; overwhelming responsibilities; conflict between school demands and expectations of the university; the need for quality placements for students; and the logistics associated with getting to PDS sites. The differences in the culture of universities and the culture of schools, particularly the emphasis placed upon research as opposed to practice, are often mentioned. Yet while some teachers are sceptical of their university colleagues they seem fearful and unprepared for dealing with research issues.

Problems with maintenance and growth, funding, human resources and staffing regularly surface. Financial costs often reduce the numbers of PDSs involved. Deer and Williams (1995) found that participants in the Michigan Partnership for New Education had not been able to maintain the present PDS programmes let alone expand to the several hundred that they had originally envisaged. Teitel (1998a) confirms that while PDSs need stable funding they are mostly supported by discretionary grants and as a consequence there is insecurity and instability linked to various levels of funding. And as Teitel states, the funding arrangements do raise serious questions about long-term commitment to the PDS movement and how long PDSs will survive.

Discretionary funding is not the only factor that may lead to down-sizing. Zimpher (1990) claims that PDSs involve higher costs in terms of money, time and personnel than traditional student teaching. The tremendous expenditure of energy and human resources means that universities cannot provide human resources at the level required for working effectively with the schools. Likewise, practising teachers often have insufficient time to meet the demands made upon them (Deer & Williams, 1995). Resta (1998) states that the time demands placed upon university staff far exceed the normal on-campus teaching commitments and lack of university recognition of the heavy demands of PDS work can lead to low morale.

Where off-campus work is isolated from the mainstream activities of the university those members not involved in PDS work are unaware of what is going on at the PDS sites. As a result those not involved in PDS work may have little or no opportunity to learn about or discuss PDS-inspired ideas. The liaison work is time consuming and while university staff in some instances may be compensated with reduced course loading and supervision, other demands are often placed upon them due to staff shortages (Teitel, 1997). Thus, both teachers and university lecturers may already be overloaded in sustaining their traditional roles and programmes. Tom (1998) argues that the overload on staff can be substantial because meaningful preservice involvement takes significant time, let alone any effort to reform schools. Moreover, problems generated at a PDS site may not necessarily fit neatly with a university staff member's area of specialisation.

Teachers and university staff often have different interests and levels of commitment of time and energy. Whereas universities consider research to be a primary goal, teachers may view research as useful but secondary or peripheral to their primary function of teaching (Ponticelli, 1990). Classroom teachers are often disparaging in their comments about the primacy of theory in teacher preparation.

University lecturers are often disparaging about classroom teachers' lack of theoretical understanding of their practice (Dynak & Dynak, 1996). These differences are often difficult to bridge (Barkesdale-Ladd, 1994).

Challenges like the ones outlined suggest that it may be hard to maintain a PDS. Gettys and Ray (1996) found that once the initial excitement waned, the collaborative efforts often faded away. Teitel (1997) claims that there may be a high-energy start up and a great middle period, but the tricky part is maintaining the interest. The cultures of the workplaces of the partners differ dramatically in such things as work tempo and focuses, rewards, and degree of power and autonomy (Brookhart & Loadman, 1990). And yet the partners are expected to participate in institutional cultures that are distinctly different while often there is no infrastructure for coping with dilemmas. Furthermore, some participants may be reluctant to break away from the established ways of doing things.

Cochrane-Smith and Lytle (1993) report that because teachers have not traditionally had a major role in the preparation of new teachers the PDSs are costly in terms of consultation and negotiation time for all personnel involved. Carefully worded contracts setting out the roles, responsibilities and the accountabilities have been required at some PDSs. Fountain (1997) acknowledges that there are multiple opportunities for misunderstandings to occur. There is more intense mutual scrutiny. As some PDS classroom teachers become more deeply involved in teacher education they report dissatisfaction with what they perceive as poor preparation of student teachers. On the other hand, some university staff look askance at some of the teaching practices they observe (Teitel, 1997).

The different organisational structures can lead to tensions (Metcalf-Turner & Fischetti, 1996). There may be insufficient agreement about the purposes and function. Teachers can feel distanced from decision-making and administrative arrangements, and while some teachers like to be at the cutting edge they can be sharply critical of problem areas and perceived flaws (Robinson, 1996). As teachers take on multiple roles, the additional supervision and liaison may detract from their ability to fully perform as classroom teachers (Hargreaves, 1994; Vaili, Cooper & Frankes, 1997).

Differences in philosophical issues and perceptions of work and work-place culture suggest that often the people who contribute to this type of initiative may not get rewarded. While PDS sites may offer rich opportunities for action research, they provide limited opportunities for the traditional experimental and empirical research that is preferred by the prestigious research journals. Promotion for university lecturers mostly favours those who have publications in refereed journals (Teitel, 1997). Many universities do not give high priority to the preparation of teachers or recognition of staff who contribute to schools.

Gulledge (1998) cautions about recommending PDS initiatives for initiating collaborative research and inquiry. She found that teachers captured the research agenda and rather than engaging in collaborative research and genuine inquiry as they agreed, they hired consultants who provided training in one particular approach and an expensive resource kit. Dynak and Dynak (1996) found that linking in-service teachers' professional development with preservice teacher preparation was complex because the needs of the participants differed in quality and intensity. Teachers' theories often went unexamined and because teachers are anxious to provide models of good practice for their student teachers, they do not explore innovative ideas.

Bullough et al. (1997), argue that PDS programme efforts have been mostly guided by intuition and hunches rather than been informed through systematic data collection. They suggest that aspects of programmes are often inconsistent and more fragmented than originally planned. The reports do tend to be mainly descriptive with little data to draw upon. As Ross (1995) states, anecdotal evidence has been marshalled to support the authors' claims. Birrell and Tibbetts (1996) note logistical problems such as the lack of time to engage in collaborative activity and ongoing professional development at the level required for education reform and school renewal. The potential for turnover in the leadership of schools and universities has been commented on (Resta, 1998). Teitel (1997) observes that knowing and sustaining key people, and having a history with them, helps enormously when problems arise (Teitel, 1997).

Often difficulties are associated with timetable arrangements. Scheduling meeting times is difficult (Deer & Williams, 1995). Teaching at PDS sites takes extra time and university lecturers find that they are constantly carrying teaching materials around with them. Often parking space at the university and the school sites is at a premium. Equally important, a lack of teaching space at some PDS sites has resulted from increasing enrolments so that in some instances space, originally allocated for university classes, has been taken to house classes of children (Resta 1998). Yet on-site teaching space is vital to success (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

Several concerns are connected to equity issues. While PDSs are perceived as an alternative route to teacher preparation, not all schools have received the benefits. Where additional funding and staffing resources have been granted, students have experienced better quality placements but many student teachers are not gaining experience at PDSs. And as the partnerships are scaled down then there are fewer opportunities for student teachers to experience PDSs (Deer & Williams, 1995). Valli, Cooper and Frankes (1997) maintain that PDSs partners have failed to transform public schools into multicultural, democratic learning communities. They have ignored the needs of their communities and the rhetoric about equity and social justice (Murrell, 1998). Although there may be commitment, there seems an inability to cope with deep-seated issues like equity. Thus, faced with the more immediate need of providing student teacher placements, PDSs seem to have given little more than lip service to the importance of equity (Teitel, 1998).

These commentators illustrate a more measured analysis. Although there remains strong support for the PDS movement, the reports of success tend to be of "paradise envisioned not gained" (Goodlad, 1994, p. 218). While a great deal of effort has been devoted to establishing school-university partnerships there does not appear to be a model that has fully met the original intentions in the diversity of practices. As Murrell (1998) points out, the goal to improve teaching and schooling in culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse urban schools has been problematic. Although partnerships identify themselves as PDSs, what actually constitutes a PDS has not been determined (Sykes, 1997). The leap between creating a PDS and achieving improved learning environments for children is huge. There is still a lot to be learned about how PDSs can really foster the regeneration of schools and university schools of education (Tom, 1998).

BROADER ISSUES

After the considerable effort devoted to the mechanics of bringing university lecturers and classroom teachers together, little attention has been devoted to ideas about the nature of schools. Myers (1996) claims that what has been achieved has tended to be meagre first steps. PDS participants have not really focused enough on improving student teaching and learning. Rather than reconceptualising the learning of children, contributing to the knowledge base of teaching, or helping university staff and experienced teachers reflect on their own instructional practices and views of the learning process, the participants have merely tried to build smoother connections. Thus the assumption that theory is divorced from practice has been perpetuated. PDSs have made a significant contribution to restructuring teacher preparation but student teachers have continued to be prepared in the context of old ideas. The status quo has continued.

Bullough et al. (1997), have concluded that the PDS movement has had little influence upon teachers' professional growth. Murrell (1998) maintains that PDSs have not been at the leading edge of innovative and improved practice. Because they have continued to hide problems in urban schooling, children and disadvantaged communities have not benefited. Murrell argues the teaching hospital is not the best model for building a collaborative partnership because it represents a system that is inflexible, linear and top-down. He asks whether the PDSs are really true innovations or just a name change for what has already existed for traditional student teacher induction.

These broader concerns raise important questions. Is it really possible to educate pupils, prepare new teachers, develop innovative teaching practices, conduct collaborative research and provide support for ongoing professional development, within the context of one organisational structure? Can multiple goals linked to pupil achievement, student teacher induction, improved teacher practice and educational reform, really be achieved?

SUPPORT FOR PDSs

Others argue that the new type of partnership arrangements are preferable. PDSs should not be perceived as a product but as an evolving process of adopting and adapting new ideas (Million & Ware, 1997). There is international interest too. Although experiencing difficulty in coming up with a PDS model in the diversity of practices, Australians Deer and Williams (1995) nonetheless praise the collaborative efforts required. While arguing that it is not really necessary to have the PDS framework to foster collaboration, Murrell (1998), acknowledges that the PDS movement has encouraged conjoint activity.

Neither do PDSs remain static. Teitel (1995) followed up an original study of three partnerships and found major changes had occurred in two of them, with teachers taking an increasing role as co-teachers, guest speakers, and in micro-teaching supervision. Previously the teachers had not had these opportunities because the university had not welcomed their input. As the university staff had drawn on their expertise the teachers were thinking about the educational theories that underpinned their practices. They had increased their role in modifying the teacher education programme and because the experience involved them and helped to keep them up to date with current thinking, most teachers enrolled in graduate programmes. Kochan (1996) also believes that most PDS teachers have been interested in trying out new practices.

There are further indications that some PDS teachers have enrolled in postgraduate study (Clarke, 1997). In some instances student teachers and classroom teachers have completed course credits at the PDS sites. Lectures focus on subjects and theoretical aspects while the practical component is linked to action research. These arrangements allow experienced teachers to work in teams and study real life problems that are relevant to learning and teaching in their classrooms. Clarke argues that this approach is stimulating because it integrates teaching, learning and research.

Although demanding upon staffing and human resources, involving teachers in the planning and teaching or as guest speakers in sections of courses seems to have had a very positive impact (Catelli, Nix & Papapetrou, 1996). Mantle-Bromley (1998) argues that PDS arrangements are well-suited to improving learning and teaching. PDSs can provide exemplary teachers, offer continuing education for all professionals, and encourage inquiry into educational practices. It appears that the new types of partnerships have helped PDS teachers to know more about university programmes and that they have become less sceptical about the university's teacher preparation. Many appreciate the connections with the university.

Student teachers stress the value of PDS experiences. They argue that they get more individual help and diverse instruction. Neubert and Binko (1998) found that at the end of their second student teaching experience, 11 student teachers placed at a PDS site performed at the "competent" level as opposed to the "minimally satisfactory" level demonstrated by the comparison group from the regular programme. These authors concluded that the PDS experience was more positive and effective than the regular programme in preparing preservice teachers in maintaining classroom discipline, using technology effectively and reflecting upon teaching. Nearly all the participants believed their curriculum knowledge had been enhanced because professional development opportunities had been more relevant.

Gettys and Ray (1996) confirm that student teachers like attending university courses taught at the PDS site, while experiencing classroom life earlier than students in the traditional programmes. Fountain (1997) found that PDS experiences changed student teachers' attitudes and raised their levels of confidence to work in lower socio-economic urban schools. They sought positions in areas where children came from low-income families.

University lecturers may benefit, too. PDSs, as well as serving as critical catalysts, can provide socialisation opportunities. Dolly (1998) claims that PDSs are an ideal setting to help newly-appointed university staff develop skills in working with collaborative groups on real life issues. University staff members who have traditionally worked as independent researchers and teachers can become adept at working collaboratively in both teaching and research.

Some critical analysts are prepared to argue that research and innovation, as advocated by the Holmes group, has been achieved. Resta (1998) maintains that in Texas clusters of teachers, teacher educators and researchers are collaborating in ongoing research and that there is growing involvement of teachers not only as partners in research but as initiators of research. Catelli, Nix and Papapetrou (1996) report that action research has been successful in the context of school-university partnerships to institute change and improvement in professional education and school curriculum in the New York City area.

DISCUSSION

While no description of a PDS suggests that the multiplicity of goals envisioned by proponents for the new partnerships have all been achieved, the evidence suggests that innovative changes have occurred in some PDS programmes and that different groups have benefited. At least some goals have been achieved. There is no doubt that the PDSs have been more successful as sites for teacher education. Unquestionably, greater emphasis has been placed upon teacher preparation than upon school renewal and education reform.

PDS arrangements do not appear to have competed with mainstream teacher education. Both approaches seem to coexist with little conflict and little or no change to traditional teacher education programmes (Teitel, 1997). Apart from handbooks being updated and made more specific, there have been few formal agreements. PDSs, in practice, seem to have emerged from intensive planning involving all the partners. Those universities and schools that already had relationships were able to move more quickly into cooperative planning. Others required more time and effort to develop trust, shared decision-making, workable organisations, roles and support systems (Resta, 1998). Neither have the new partnerships discontinued because they experienced problems with the loss of key personnel. The reports show that no single individual has been essential to the perpetuation of the PDSs (Teitel, 1997). However, there is no doubt that PDS work has required high-energy input from all participants. The various case studies draw attention to the nature of PDS work that some commentators have described as "messy, context-sensitive, dynamic and unpredictable" (Bullough, et al. 1997, p.154).

It is difficult to generate one particular model that might assist with future school-university partnership developments in New Zealand. Yet there are some elements linked to the selection of PDSs that are relevant. PDSs have been chosen mostly because they were considered to be innovative and willing to engage in change. Some had an established reputation for excellence. Others were selected for their demographic characteristics, historical or existing relationships with a university, proximity to the university, or the school administration and university staff were willing to work together. Similarly when the University of Waikato sought to develop a new type of school-university partnership these factors were taken into consideration (McGee et al. 2000).

It is important to recognise that in New Zealand teachers and teacher educators have not been remote from each other. In the partnerships that exist teacher educators have generally placed "a great deal of confidence in the normal schools" (Julian, 1997, p. iv). In addition to supervising preservice practicums the normal schools have offered support for university courses through observational and micro teaching opportunities. As well as the mechanics needed for collaborative relationships, many of the special qualities that characterise PDSs are already in place. Many normal school teachers, in order to provide models of exemplary practice, have engaged in professional development. Teachers have received additional allowances and there are extra resources and facilities, such as meeting rooms, available to support student teacher activities (Julian, 1997).

Nevertheless some student teachers, school communities and university teacher education programmes may benefit from new ways of doing things. Collaborative effort can create new roles for participants within different organisational structures. In the school-University of Waikato partnership most participants commented very favourably upon being more actively involved in

new roles and being able to apply different approaches to teacher education (McGee et al. 2000).

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTION

Getting a partnership off the ground takes commitment, especially when problems emerge (Alexander, 1990). Because participants mostly wish to gain from new relationships, all partners need to be clear about the overall purpose. Myers (1996) suggests that partnerships should be guided by the single purpose of improving learning and teaching. A school-university partnership should not be a superficial arrangement. There needs to be a shared vision and sincere commitment. All community members should want the partnership to succeed. It is essential that the organisation, roles and the structures that support the professional development of all participants, be in place. Therefore, it is important to think about what is the right mix of people and size of the student teacher cohort for the partnership school site.

Opportunities should be made for all participants to develop competence and formulate values. Myers (1996) claims teachers do not learn to teach by simply receiving information or by replicating the teaching they experienced. Rather, they draw on their life experiences to construct personal meaning and develop beyond teaching in the ways their teachers taught them or their university lecturers suggested they teach. In the school-University of Waikato partnership the teacher participants emphasised that through reflection and having to articulate their practice to student teachers they were able to build their own personally-constructed theories and link these to research. Rather than seeing practice as divorced from theory they came to believe it was desirable to keep in touch with current research and useful to have regular contact with university staff (McGee et al. 2000).

In order to develop a knowledge base for teaching and learning, participants need to engage in rigorous inquiry and ongoing monitoring rather than relying upon intuition and hunches. Quality assurance and accountability procedures helped to identify the needs of all participants in the school-University of Waikato partnership. The data gathered contributed to changes as the partnership evolved and adapted over two years (McGee et al. 2000).

The role of the school principal in instigating change should be recognised as a crucial factor. The new approaches required the support of senior management (McGee et al. 2000). Bowen, Atkinson and Dunlap (1995) hold the view that PDS advocates largely ignored the role of the principal although research had shown that effective principals stimulate debate and play a key role in implementing change. Principals who are unlikely to envisage school-university partnerships as a vehicle for major restructuring or educational reform, will usually support professional development.

Support from a university can help to build teachers' confidence to engage in research (Clarke, 1997; McGee et al., 2000). Rather than being objects of inquiry, teachers and schools can become initiators and participants. Resta (1998) points out that joint research projects represent a major change in teachers' perceptions. When teachers are involved in designing and conducting their investigations within their schools, then changes in instruction and curriculum implementation are more likely to result. One successful strategy has been to offer graduate courses that focus on the needs and interests of teachers at school sites (Resta, 1998). The credibility of university staff is helped through enrolment of teachers in

programmes of advanced study at university (Kochan, 1996). Kochan also recommends that it is helpful for university lecturers to match their research and teaching to the PDS site and to work in schools where teachers are graduates. These actions, she believes, may aid understanding of each other's roles and help overcome mistrust.

Fountain (1997) believes that PDSs could be developed as emerging sites of effective practice rather than the exemplary sites so often described in the literature. PDS experiences have encouraged student teachers to go into the lower income urban schools, and principals have actively recruited beginning teachers with PDS experience. Both principals and teachers in partnership schools have been able to provide references for their preservice teachers.

Where a partnership experience has been successful some schools have formed clusters for inquiry. McIntire (1995) believes clusters can tap into the full potential of the collaborative relationship and can produce better, more creative and more imaginative ideas. With university staff involved and influential at a PDS site, participants are able to focus on different problems. Parents and community members may be involved, too. Partnerships that are inclusive in their membership can be more responsive to broader social, political and cultural aspects of a community. Murrell (1998) argues that teachers and teacher educators have operated from the "sanctity" of their professional domain. Murrell maintains that success of a partnership depends on the participants and what they do and how they go about it. In a similar vein, Whitford and Schelor (1987) believe that to bridge differences and create successful school-university partnerships there needs to be joint ownership of issues and innovations.

Partnerships can occur at sites other than schools. Tom (1998) argues that the use of school sites does not necessarily encourage the participants to go beyond the parameters of school programmes. Partnerships for at-risk children, for example, can create opportunities for better coordination and integration. He believes that all children can benefit from new networks that encourage teachers and universities to share their expertise.

Successful school-university partnerships must have access to long-term funding. In reality, however, partnership participants do not usually control the funding. In order to attract grants and sustain funding interest, school-university partnerships need to be visible (Fountain, 1997). This is particularly the case where schools may expect to be compensated for the services they provide to the university (Kochan, 1996). McGee et al. (2000) state that contract funding allowed extra resources to be put into developing the school-University of Waikato partnership and that any innovations would not necessarily have been possible under usual funding arrangements.

Team coordination and the willingness to be flexible helps. Participants can become frazzled. International research shows that a source of tension in most partnerships between schools and universities is the differences between the goals and roles of each institution (Brookhart & Loadman, 1990; Bullough et al., 1999; Hargreaves, 1994; Ponticelli, 1990). As Alexander (1990) points out, within the comfortable language of partnership, universities and schools are culturally, financially and instrumentally different worlds. This aspect needs to be acknowledged. Promoting new and enhanced relationships may require forethought and sensitivity and the best way to create successful school-university partnerships may be to take small steps. Evidence suggests that it is unlikely that new types of school-university partnerships will result in radical change and institutional reform. Enhanced partnerships, however, can do more than prepare

preservice teachers through supervision. They can provide opportunities to go beyond this narrow function and assist in improved educational outcomes for all participants.

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