

SCHOOL- UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

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The Monmouth University Partnership: Redesigning Practice

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ABSTRACT: In this article, the Monmouth University partners describe our efforts to constantly explore new dimensions of learning, teaching, and teacher preparation. We begin by describing two recent initiatives developed by our partnership: the piloting and implementation of a yearlong clinical internship experience to replace traditional student teaching, and the Monmouth Teacher Residency Program, which is a paid internship that involves teacher candidates in clinical experiences year round. Description of additional initiatives are organized according to the PDS essentials; including projects to increase P-12 student learning, tools to facilitate the mentoring of teacher candidates, and initiatives to enhance the professional development of school partners.

The article includes all nine of the NAPDS Nine Essentials: 1. A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community; 2. A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community; 3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need; 4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants; 5. Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants; 6. An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved; 7. A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration; 8. Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings; and 9. Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures.

School and university partnerships offer excellent opportunities for innovation in teaching and teacher education. When school and university educators combine their expertise to address problems of practice, they make a dynamic partnership for designing new programs and creating new practice. By uniting in common cause, the Monmouth University Partnership has developed a series of initiatives for increasing student learning, strengthening teacher preparation, and fostering the professional development of teachers. Driving these initiatives forward is our

commitment to innovation. In this article, the Monmouth University partners describe our efforts to constantly move our partnership forward, to extend the boundaries of our thinking, and to explore new dimensions of learning, teaching, and teacher preparation.

The Monmouth University Partnership

The Monmouth University Partnership is located in central New Jersey near the Atlantic shore. It consists of Monmouth

University and six partnership school districts: Freehold Township Schools, Hazlet School District, Long Branch District, Manalapan-Englishtown Regional School District, Middletown School District, and Ocean School District. Monmouth University has approximately 400 undergraduate students and 60 graduate students in the teacher preparation program. The approximate size of each of the partnership schools is:

- Freehold Township - 8 schools; 4,256 students; and 341 classroom teachers;
- Hazlet - 8 schools; 3,220 students; and 264 classroom teachers;
- Long Branch - 9 schools; 5,396 students; and 506 classroom teachers
- Manalapan-Englishtown - 8 schools; 5,161 students; and 395 classroom teachers
- Middletown - 17 schools; 9,669 students; and 903 classroom teachers
- Ocean - 9 schools; 3,936 students; and 339 classroom teachers

Yearlong Clinical Internship

Our deep belief in the power of partnership has resulted in two recent initiatives, both of which involve extending and deepening the experience of teacher candidates in schools. The first is the piloting and implementation of a yearlong clinical internship experience to replace the semester of traditional student teaching. During the first semester, teacher candidates engage for at least 10 hours per week in their field placement while they finish their classes. During the second semester, teacher candidates remain in the same placement while completing their full time student teaching.

Teachers and administrators have quickly recognized the added value of the yearlong clinical internship when they see it in practice. The single most important benefit is increased P-12 student learning, which can be attributed in part to the changed dynamics of the yearlong clinical experience. Spending an entire year in a school enables the candidate to develop stronger relationships with the P-12 students, the mentor teacher, other faculty, the administration, and the staff. The longer experience also enables teacher candidates to be part of inservice days, parent-teacher conferences, and after school events. In short, teacher candidates become members of the school (Foster et al, 2018).

Teacher Residency Program

A second initiative for extending clinical experiences is The Monmouth Teacher Residency Program, which is an expansion of the current yearlong clinical experience. The Teacher Residency is a paid internship that involves teacher candidates in schools year round, including semester breaks, the months of May and June, and for extended school programs in the summer. The goal of the program is to enhance the teacher candidates'

practice knowledge, to make them fluent in their practice, and to socialize them to the work of teaching in a school setting. To accomplish this goal, teacher candidates are engaged in a multiple year apprenticeship, during which time they are compensated for their efforts to become as profession ready as possible. This enables them to replace their part time work outside of education with work in schools that better prepares them for their teaching careers. Participants include sophomores, juniors, seniors, and initial licensure graduate students. The Monmouth University partnership currently has 35 undergraduate and graduate teacher candidates involved in this pilot program (Henning et al., 2018).

Additional activities will include work that has been traditionally done by substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, and tutors. In turn, monies from school budgets to compensate these positions will be invested into the teacher residency program. Other sources of funds include professional development monies and summer enrichment programs (DeMoss, Easton-Brooks, Hofman, Henning, & LeCelle-Peterson, 2017). This approach to compensating teacher candidates continues to evolve as it becomes increasingly clear that each day teacher candidates spend in a P-12 school increases their value to the school. In addition to the increased value of their experience, teacher candidates bring their passion, a career commitment, and a daily determination to invest in learning about their profession. We believe this is a powerful vision for teacher preparation that will inevitably become the standard in the profession.

Design Principles 1-5

Our designs for practice are guided by a set of principles that are rooted in the nine essentials for professional development schools. The essentials provide continuity and clear direction for moving the partnership forward. They also serve as an organizing principle for the remainder of the article, which is divided into two primary sections. The first section addresses the five primary goals of the partnership, which are to: 1) increase P-12 student learning, 2) provide outstanding teacher preparation, 3) provide professional development opportunities across the partnership, 4) innovate new practices in education and teacher education, and 5) disseminate what we have learned. These correspond with the first five essentials. In the second section, we will discuss Design Principles 6-9, which correspond to the remaining four essentials.

Comprehensive Mission (First Essential) - Increased Student Learning

Each new and current initiative is evaluated based on its capacity for increasing P-12 student learning. When done well, a preparation program focused on increased P-12 student learning will result in greater buy-in from schools, increased collaboration, and the most effective teacher preparation. Ultimately, it will lead to a shared responsibility between schools and teacher

preparation programs for P-12 student learning and teacher preparation. In addition, this approach will also enable the greatest synergy among partners and yield the most cost-efficient designs. Targeting P-12 student learning ensures the best quality teacher preparation, since the best contexts for learning to teach are those with high levels of engagement and learning. New clinical experience design features that have facilitated student learning are longer clinical experiences, the implementation of co-teaching, and the assessment of teacher candidate impact on student learning.

One of our primary strategies for increasing P-12 student learning was the implementation of the yearlong clinical internship and the teacher residency program. Creating longer clinical experiences facilitates student learning by allowing teacher candidates to become more confident and fully functioning in their surroundings, to build stronger relationships with students, and to employ a greater variety of more complex teaching strategies. Every day a teacher candidate spends in a clinical setting increases their impact on P-12 student learning.

A second approach to increasing student learning has been the implementation of co-teaching. Co-teaching during the clinical internship has been widely adopted throughout the country because of its demonstrated impact on student learning. During the first semester of the yearlong experience, teacher candidates can engage with differentiating instruction, providing one-on-one instruction, and contributing to the development of new lessons or materials. During the full time teaching experience, the teacher candidate can assume a lead role in team teaching, while the mentor teacher provides additional one-on-one support for P-12 students. Throughout the entire year, the P-12 students receive the benefits that come with having two teachers in the room (Hendrickson, & Henning, 2013).

Because teacher candidates are in the same school for an entire year, their impact on P-12 student learning can be measured more easily through the already existing school data systems. For example, teacher candidates can assess the impact of their instruction by writing Student Growth Objectives with their mentor teachers at the beginning of the year, and then later analyzing school assessment data to determine their students' learning in relation to their objectives. This type of work will be invaluable to demonstrating the added value to schools from co-teaching.

School assessment data can also be used to compare the performance of classrooms with teacher candidates to those without candidates in previous years. For example, in one elementary school, LinkIt (school assessment) data was collected over a two-year period to track student growth in literacy and math during a traditional semester long student teaching experience that included co-teaching. Almost all teachers with student teachers experienced an increase in student learning that was higher than the school average (Duffy et al., 2016; Henning & Duffy, 2017).

Another example of our focus on student learning is a Response to Intervention using four yearlong clinical interns,

who provided an hour of intensive instruction to struggling readers. The choice of the intervention was based on student testing data. Additional data was collected throughout the eight weeks of instruction. The findings showed that the students made significant reading gains within their specialized area of reading. Simultaneously, the teacher candidates received valuable instruction and practice on reading assessment results, planning for targeted interventions, and implementing an array of teaching strategies to address specialized problems (Henning, Aldarelli, & Kuras, 2016).

Preparation of Future Educators (Second Essential)

The second objective of the partnership is to provide outstanding teacher preparation. A salient objective has been to clearly articulate the expectations for teacher candidate development in the field from the beginning to the end of the program. To put such a curriculum in place requires identifying the target practices that teacher candidates are to learn, charting a clear map for accomplishing those practices, and identifying specific instructional strategies for fostering teacher candidates' development in clinical settings.

Teacher candidates develop more quickly into high impact teachers when expectations are clearly articulated through explicitly defined practices. Accordingly, we have adopted *The Developmental Curriculum for Clinical Experiences*, which supports partnerships by facilitating communication and collaboration (for a fuller explanation, see Henning, Gut, & Beam, 2015 and Henning et al., 2016). *The Developmental Curriculum* is an explicit statement of expectations for clinical experiences across the entire teacher preparation program that uses commonly recognized practitioner language. This document enables stakeholders to refer to one concise document that summarizes program expectations and is expressed in practitioner language. *The Developmental Curriculum* facilitates communication across programs within individual teacher preparation institutions by helping teachers and professors better understand their role within the larger activities of the teacher candidate and the larger goals of the program.

The partnership is also in the process of adopting a set or performance assessments based on high leverage teaching practices. These performance assessments are intended to help mentor teachers provide rich and informed feedback to the teacher candidates in the classroom and for professors to provide feedback on video recordings of high leverage teaching practices. To ensure that the performance-based assessments are consistent with current practices in the field, they are aligned with InTASC standards and high leverage teaching practices (for an example rubric see Henning & Duffy, 2017).

A third approach has been the design and development of a substitute teaching academy. This academy was created to support teacher candidates who will be substitute teaching as part of the teacher residency program. It is designed to provide strategies to teacher candidates (substitute teachers) for a) building relationships, b) classroom management, and c) widely

applicable instructional strategies that engage P-12 students. The Substitute Teacher Academy places special emphasis on practical strategies that are beneficial for teaching as well as substitute teaching (for more information, see Oh, 2018).

Professional Development (Third Essential)

The third design principle is to provide substantial support for the professional development of mentor teachers and clinical educators so they can successfully carry out their new role. Support for mentor teachers included the development of a mentoring workshop to provide guidance to teachers. Monmouth University's innovative Mentor Academy aims to provide strategies for mentoring teacher candidates during the yearlong clinical experience. Participants learn strategies for facilitating teacher candidate development through co-teaching, providing feedback, and fostering reflection. A primary objective of the academy is to provide mentoring tools to facilitate student learning and teacher candidate development. These include attention to the following: orientation guides, interview protocols, high leverage teaching practices, the developmental curriculum, inquiry tools, performance assessment rubrics, student perception surveys, teacher candidate self-assessments, reflection questions, videotaping analysis and the edTPA (Henning, Gut, & Beam, 2015; Riddle, Falco, & Henning, 2017).

There are also four academies in addition to the Mentoring Academy, including the Superintendent's Academy, the Principal's Academy, the Special Service Academy, and the Central Jersey Consortium for Equity and Excellence. The purpose of the academies is to create an opportunity for dialogue and an exchange of ideas and experiences. Each of these academies is governed by a board of partnership representatives and each provides professional development in a significant area. Four of the academies are supported through membership fees paid by the school districts. The Academy Steering Committees plan the professional development sessions to be carried out by each of the four Academies. The ultimate goal of each of these Academies is to support education leaders and their goals of improving instruction and increasing learning. The number of attendees at each session averages between 40-50 participants.

Innovative and Reflective Practices (Fourth Essential)

The additional time in a clinical setting has allowed us to further experiment with ways to enhance teacher candidate reflection by providing them with more data about their instruction. Two of these initiatives are surveys of P-12 students on video recording teacher candidates and video recordings of teacher candidate performance. We believe the increased clinical experience combined with extra feedback will substantially improve teacher preparation.

Video recording. To improve their ability to impact student learning, teacher candidates participated in a pilot in which they

were asked to complete and video record four different performances or tasks: teaching an individual or small group, leading a discussion, eliciting student thinking, and preparing a video. Mentor teachers provided opportunities for the teacher candidates to practice the four tasks, as well as continuing feedback and encouragement to the teacher candidates. The methods instructors view the video and provide feedback to the teacher candidate, but even more importantly they observe the video as feedback to inform their instructional strategies for teaching methods (Romagnoli, Arnold, Henning, & Andrews, 2016; Romagnoli, Bazler, & Kim, 2018).

Student survey. The School of Education has enlisted a commercial survey to provide more feedback to teacher candidates. The student survey collects student perceptions of the teacher candidate. This evidence of teacher candidate performance is used to provide teacher candidates with formative feedback on their performance. Teacher candidates use this additional information to reflect more deeply on their performance and improve their teaching (Riddle et al., 2017).

Sharing of Results (Fifth Essential)

We regularly share our work at the National Association for Professional Development School's annual conference, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education annual meeting, and through publication. By continually striving to remain part of the dialogue on professional development schools and clinically-based teacher education, we are engaged in a reflection process that is continually driving our learning, our exploration of new horizons, and our growth as a teacher preparation institution.

Design Principles 6-9

Design principles 6-9 describe the operational structure of the partnership. It is through these structures that we convene with our partners, conceive and discuss new ideas, and share what we are learning through our new initiatives. Attending to these design principles helps give voice to all our partners and helps our partnership remain viable and strong.

Articulation Agreement (Sixth Essential) and Structure (Seventh Essential)

The Monmouth University Partnership is organized around four primary groups: The Dean's Advisory Council, the Partnership Advisory Council, the Professional Development School Committee, and the Academy Steering Committees. Each of these groups is described below. The Dean's Advisory committee consists of educators, community members, and the dean who review and initiate projects across the School of Education. The Partnership Advisory Council serves as an overall governing body for the Monmouth University Partnership. It consists of P-12 school administrators, university administrators, and faculty members.

The Partnership Advisory Council provides recommendations regarding the mission, the long term goals, and the more immediate strategic objectives of the partnership. The PDS Committee consists of school liaisons, Monmouth University liaisons, teachers, university and clinical faculty. The role of this committee is to facilitate communication, develop implementation strategies, and to organize and carry out partnership initiatives. School liaisons are P-12 teachers or administrators who serve as contact people for the schools. Their role is to work with the university on clinical placements, teaching assignments, special initiatives, and other matters related to the partnership. Monmouth University liaisons are university faculty or staff who serve as contact people for the university. Their role is to work with schools on clinical placements, teaching assignments, special initiatives, and other matters related to the partnership.

The different tiers of the partnership organization allow for rapid communication among partners from planning and organization to implementation. The Dean's Advisory Committee meets 3 times per year to review the direction of the School of Education, discuss special initiatives, and make recommendations to the Partnership Advisory Committee. The Partnership Advisory Committee meets twice per year to set annual goals and objectives, review past work, and to develop new initiatives. The Professional Development School Committee meets at the beginning of each semester to discuss placements, procedural changes, and the implementation of new strategies.

Collaboration, reflection, and regular communication occur through other venues as well. For example, a number of Monmouth University classes are conducted onsite in schools, thus facilitating the collaborative work of professors and teachers. The partnership also hosts several events per year. These include the orientations for cooperating teachers, clinical internship orientation, and the supervisor training. Two especially valuable events have been the Yearlong Experience Dinner and the Teacher Residency Dinner. These partnership dinners provided a venue for partners to learn more about the current partnership initiatives by listening to colleagues share their experiences. It provided a wonderful vehicle for collaboration, reflection, and communication.

Formal Roles (Eighth Essential) and Dedicated and Shared Resources

Several types of resources are dedicated to and shared across the partnership, including the expertise of the participants, stipends, and course releases. Currently, we are engaged in further deepening our partnership through the Teacher Residency program. In this program, teacher candidates become part of the school's budget by joining the professional staff as a substitute teacher, tutor, or extended summer employee. Simultaneously, the School of Education supports teacher candidate work through scholarships and graduate assistantships. Thus, we are currently exploring ways to integrate these forms of student support into a single stipend that will compensate teacher candidates for their time in the field. In this way, we are hoping

to create the basis for an even deeper relationship and more productive partnership.

Conclusion

In this article, we have tried to illustrate the Monmouth University Partnership commitment to innovation in teaching and teacher preparation. Our initiatives explore the advantages of sharing resources, expertise, and mutual problem-solving to create new visions and pathways for school and university partnerships. We are on a journey to the new world of clinically-based teacher education. In that world, teacher candidates engage in multi-year clinical experiences in Professional Development Schools. The expectations for their development is explicit and well understood by teachers; their development is supported by coursework that illuminates and extends their experiences; and they are compensated for their work in schools. When we arrive in that new world, we are confident that the call to innovate will be as strong as ever. **SUP**

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