

Chapter 22

Co-Development of Professional Practice at a Professional Development School through Instructional Rounds and Lesson Study

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the co-development of professional practices for both clinical faculty and teacher candidates at a Professional Development School through instructional rounds and lesson study. In particular, the authors highlight the nature of the transformative partnership of a collaborative network composed of two university teacher educators, a school-based site facilitator, and clinical faculty who co-designed and implemented a clinical model to enhance the teaching and learning of mathematics methods for elementary teacher candidates and faculty. The model of instructional rounds (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009) and lesson study (Lewis, 2002; Lewis, Perry, & Murata, 2006; Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004) were used in an elementary mathematics methods course at a Professional Development School to support teacher candidates in becoming reflective practitioners alongside clinical faculty. The chapter explores the following research questions: (1) In what ways did the targeted Instructional Rounds and Lesson Study impact the development of teacher candidates and clinical faculty's professional practice? (2) How does the co-development model for professional development enhance the transformative partnership at the Professional Development School?

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INTRODUCTION

This study is an outcome of a three-year project called the Professional Development School Math Lab where a mathematics methods course was woven into clinical practice at a Professional Development School (PDS) site with the collaboration of a university faculty and school based faculty. We began the model with a focus on Lesson Study (Lewis, 2002), a professional development structure that is teacher led to leverage the transformative partnership we had between the university faculty and the school teacher-leaders. As we continued to improve our model and partnership, we have added Instructional Rounds that allow both clinical faculty and teacher candidates to have specific targeted observations and bridge the connection between the theory and practice. The primary focus of the PDS math lab design included:

- Targeted instructional rounds to focus on teaching practices such on differentiation, assessment, and math discourse in the classroom, which were the areas that were most challenging for novice teachers;
- Implementation of inquiry-based reform-oriented curricular materials through Lesson Study;
- Reflection on content, instructional rounds, lesson planning, and for math teaching.

It was designed based on the premise of modeling “a partnership of preparation program” that “designs course work and clinical preparation” in tandem so that the translation of knowledge into practice is explicitly demonstrated in a PDS classroom setting (NCATE, 2010, p. 4).

The chapter begins with the design of the PDS Math Lab and how the PDS setting provided an ideal environment for Instructional Rounds and Lesson Study with the necessary infrastructure for a transformative partnership that capitalized

on the professional development of teachers at all levels, experienced and novice. Then, the authors will present data from the study that demonstrates the outcome from this transformative partnership that helped develop and fine-tune clinical faculty and teacher candidates’ mathematical knowledge for teaching. Finally, the authors will share recommendations and future directions for research.

BACKGROUND

PDS: An Ideal Setting for Transformative Partnership for University-School Efforts

Identifying high leverage clinical practice at Professional Development Schools is an important component of research on effective PDS sites (Zeichner, 2010) and key organizations like the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education have released reports supporting Clinical Preparation in Teacher Education (AACTE, 2010; CCSSO, 2012; NCATE, 2010). High-quality descriptive reports on design decisions are crucial in understanding the impact the design has on the development of teacher candidates and the professional development of in-service teachers that ultimately impact student learning. As we designed this model, we were intentional in our design decisions to leverage all the affordances offered through our Professional Development School partnership and focused on the goals of developing teachers’ specialized knowledge for teaching elementary mathematics.

Professional Development Schools (PDS) are innovative institutions formed through partnerships between professional education programs and P-12 schools (NCATE, 2000). The design of the Professional Development School lends itself to providing an ideal environment for

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