Professional Development Schools and the Transformation of Teacher Leadership

By Lee Teitel

Lee Teitel is an associate professor and the program director of educational administration at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. This article is an adaptation of a paper commissioned by the National Center for the Restructuring of Education, Schools, and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University, entitled "The Transformation of School Leadership in Professional Development Schools."

Professional development schools (PDSs) are exciting, innovative types of restructuring schools that are designed to be partnerships that bring about the "simultaneous renewal" of schools and teacher education programs (Goodlad 1988). Although definitions of PDSs vary, most can be characterized as collaborations between schools and colleges or universities (and sometimes community agencies) that focus on: (1) the preparation of pre-service teachers; (2) the continued professional development of experienced educators at school and college; (3) high quality education for diverse students; and (4) continuous inquiry into improving practice.

PDSs can only be effective in pursuing these goals when they successfully challenge the "institutional regularities" (Sarason 1982) of schools. As they strive to achieve these objectives, PDSs inevitably transform the roles, the relationships, and the responsibilities of teachers and administrators at the school and at the university. As PDSs evolve, they

create conditions that provide new opportunities for, and new demands on, leadership—indeed, PDSs give rise to new, more collaborative definitions of leadership. Although these changes will also affect faculty at participating colleges or universities, as well as administrators at both institutions, this paper focuses primarily on the emerging leadership roles played by classroom teachers in professional development schools. The first part of the paper looks at new roles and responsibilities for teachers, and how they develop from the mission and goals of the PDS. The second part examines how experienced and preservice teachers are being prepared and supported for these new roles, and explores the implications these findings have for schools, universities, and those who encourage and advocate for professional development schools.

There are several compelling reasons to study leadership in PDSs:

> PDSs are learning laboratories and just as we look to PDSs to contribute to research on new approaches to teaching and learning, it makes sense to look at leadership issues. When implemented as true partnerships, PDSs inevitably disturb the status quo, making them fertile arenas for emerging leadership.
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> PDSs require leaders to function in multidimensional inter-organizational settings, involving community members and/or external partners, where the traditional boundaries around a school are blurred. While this is immediately only a requirement in PDSs, which, by definition, are collaborations of two or more institutions, it is direction in which all schools are heading.
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> Growth in the popularity of PDSs raises the importance of the issue in its own right: how are teachers best prepared to be effective leaders in PDSs?

Part I: Changing Roles for Teachers in PDSs

Although historically during educational reforms, teachers' roles were to "silently and blithely...carry out programs developed by the educational elite" (Navarro 1992, p. 1), the current reform movements ask classroom teachers to take on significant new leadership roles (Gerhke 1991; Livingston 1992; Little & McLaughlin 1993). These roles and how the teachers get into them are qualitatively different from earlier models where teacher leadership was an add-on position involving a handful of individuals who were "appointed" and "anointed" (Smylie & Dennie 1990). The nature and type of these role changes are heightened in schools that are restructuring, especially in PDSs, which are special cases of restructuring. Although in past school/university collaborations, teachers were "at best, silent participants," in the current professional development school partnerships teachers are pivotal (McGowan & Powell 1993, p. 6). The pursuit of the PDSs' multifaceted agenda requires that many teachers assume a range of leadership roles:

Involvement in the preparation of pre-service teachers in a PDS is distinctly different from the roles cooperating teachers historically played. In the traditional model, a cooperating teacher is assigned a student teacher and works with him or her within the classroom, with little or no involvement with the college or with the placement or selection process. In the PDS, more typically, the teachers are involved in a number of school-wide issues: screening and placing student teachers as well as overseeing their introduction to the entire school (not just the classroom). Furthermore, as Katherine Boles (1994, p. 4) notes, "The teachers' work with preservice interns extends beyond the classroom to the larger arena of the college. Teachers have served as supervisors of interns, taught math and reading courses at the colleges, and presented guest lectures; and one teacher has co-taught [the college's] interns' curriculum seminar since the Collaborative's inception." Successful involvement with pre-service teachers can itself expand the possibilities for teacher leadership. "As teachers become mentors and teacher educators, as they assume greater responsibility for the collective profession, they also become more comfortable with the notion that seeking and leading collective improvements in practice are aspects of a professional role" (Darling-Hammond, Cobb, & Bullmaster, in press, p. 19).

Working on the continued professional development of experienced educators at school and college is another formerly administrator-run arena in which teachers are taking leadership. Many PDS teachers point to their own professional development as one of the best aspects of being in a PDS. The professional development takes the form of book clubs, presenting at and attending regional and national conferences, peer coaching, visits to other schools, and presenting workshops to student teachers or other teachers. In PDSs, teacher-initiated, flexible, and on-going workshops frequently replace traditional top-down mandated in-service workshops. In early PDSs, university faculty would often conduct these workshops for teachers, but as partnerships have evolved to a greater level of parity and appreciation for what classroom teachers know, typically the classroom teacher's role in organizing and presenting workshops (in some cases to university personnel) has grown.

Developing high quality education for diverse students sets teachers in the role of curriculum developers and curriculum interpreters. Tailoring instruction to meet the needs of students, factoring in the curriculum ideas brought by interns, and looking critically together at curricular innovation, teachers dramatically expand their leadership roles in collaborative PDS structures. In a PDS case study, Mary Jett-Simpson (1992) describes this transition over time: "the prevailing instructional paradigm was beginning to shift for many of the teachers from one of minimal curricular decision-making to one where teachers are acting as curriculum interpreters (Ben-Peretz 1990). Instead of feeling that they 'have to finish a basal' or assigning writing topics from the teacher's manual, teachers typically reported that they were making their own decisions about how to use the curriculum" (p. 14). When teachers serve as decision makers as well as deliverers of instruction, the

traditional gulfs between those who decided to adopt a curriculum and those who teach it break down (Boles 1994).

Continuous inquiry into improving practice has led teachers to new roles in helping each other conduct research, present at conferences, and take leadership in developing new models of collaborative research. Although research is often the last item on the PDS agenda to get started, PDSs are now undertaking a range of inquiries, by university-based researchers, teachers, teacher candidates, and K-12 students (Koffman & Green 1993). Collaborative research projects have to overcome the poor history of university research on teachers, the unequal status between school-based and university based faculty, and the differential knowledge and familiarity with research approaches. These problems would be likely to exist in any restructuring school; they make it harder to develop true collaborative inquiry. In a case study of how teachers and university researchers became "co-learners" in a PDS, Kathleen Fear (1991) notes the advantages the PDS has for overcoming these obstacles. Although collaborative forms of research can and do take place outside the PDS, they can be better supported and negotiated in the PDS and can contribute in significant ways to achievement of the PDS's goals (Koffman & Green 1993). As these research agendas develop, PDSs come into the forefront of what Linda Darling-Hammond calls "new ways of knowing and new ways of building knowledge":

- knowing through direct action and reflections, as well as by understanding and appreciating the findings of others;
- knowing through sharing different experiences with colleagues;
- knowing through research conducted by teachers along with researchers that is informed by the diverse experiences of individual children as well as the aggregated outcomes codified in empirical studies. (Darling-Hammond 1994, pp. 14-15.)

The process of developing these types of knowledge, and the decisions made about their application help transform the teacher's leadership roles since, "[i]n PDSs, knowledge is not viewed as a static entity residing in the upper echelons of the school bureaucracy, to be packaged in guidelines and directives and handed down from on high.... Instead, teachers' collaborative work with students, fellow teachers, preservice teachers, and university faculty push them to explore and reimagine their own roles in the collective construction of knowledge abut the learning and teaching process" (Darling-Hammond, Cobb, & Bullmaster in press, p. 7.)

Collaborative, inclusive approaches to decision making within these school-university partnerships provide important opportunities to reenforce and enhance the new roles called for in the preceding four specific aspects of the PDS agenda. PDSs explicitly seek teacher involvement in decision making; furthermore, as inter-

organizational ventures they call for a leadership that is different from intra-institutional leadership (Trachtman & Levine 1994). The organizational disruptions caused by the development of a true collaboration between a school and a college create innumerable leadership opportunities and demands. New structures evolve and in them teachers are decision makers, committee members, and collaborators, involved with finance, placement of student teachers, public relations, curriculum development, and so forth. Furthermore, the inter-organizational aspects of PDS partnerships means teachers need to serve as liaisons and boundary spanners working to bridge gaps between the world of schools and colleges. As teachers undertake leadership work in PDSs, their successes provide important validation and reinforcement, that spur greater efforts in other leadership areas. As in many PDSs, at the Norwood Street/University of Southern California Professional Practice School the teachers began with a low sense of efficacy, feeling limited by the "regularities of schooling." They "needed to be convinced that they were 'free' to make key decisions about instructional strategies, about testing, about acting as a school-within-a-school" (Lemlech & Hertzog-Foliart 1992, p. 19). But the Norwood teachers, like those described at another PDS by Judith Sandholtz and Katherine Merseth (1992) changed through their involvement: Once successful in implementing some decisions, teachers found ways to transfer this success to other issues. For instance, two teachers who were successful in getting a final examination schedule change approved reflected on it afterward, saying, "they believed it would never have happened if they had not worked together previously and experienced a sense of empowerment" (Sandholtz & Merseth 1992, p. 311).

New Opportunities, Expectations, and Demands for Teachers

In contrast to the way that historically a few teachers have been screened and selected to serve quasi-administrative roles or to focus on administratively sanctioned special projects (in curriculum development, for instance), leadership in PDSs is more broadly inclusive and presumed for many teachers. At work is nothing less than a redefinition of what a professional teacher is and does—one that calls for a substantial role outside of the classroom. Indeed, two teacher leaders active in founding a PDS in Brookline, Massachusetts, have proposed that the National Policy Board for Professional Teaching Standards include a sixth "proposition" defining standards for what teachers should know and be able to do: "Teachers are leaders who reform their work, facilitate the development of others, and have influence in domains outside the classroom" (Troen & Boles 1994, p. 14).

These new leadership roles create new pressures on teachers—different responsibilities that can lead to potential conflicts with colleagues, administrators, and others involved in the PDS. Nancy-Sue Romerdahl (1991) describes the new leadership roles for teachers as "...problematic. Teachers must be able to effectively interact with decision makers who have traditionally been their hierarchical superiors, that is school administrators or university professors. In addition, they

must be able to be effective in leadership roles with their peers in a profession that values egalitarianism" (p. 2). Furthermore, Romerdahl notes that most teachers are women, while men dominate the administrative ranks. Some typical conflicts faced by teacher leaders in PDSs include:

- A third grade teacher working on the partner college's curriculum committee, feels frustrated about the lack of parity she sees, and worries about maintaining her sense of personal efficacy as she is struggling to make change at the college.

- The teacher coordinator of a PDS notices that both of the last student teachers to be placed with a long-time colleague have done poorly and seemed to be failing until their placements were switched and they blossomed. The coordinator wonders how to tell the colleague she cannot have a student teacher placed with her because she has not done a good job of mentoring the last two.

- A PDS coordinator hears from a friend that several teachers in the building are talking behind her back, asking "Who does she think she is?"

- A coordinator is conflicted over the poor performance in the fourth week of a student teacher's placement. The university supervisor wants to give the novice some more time, but the cooperating teacher feels like his students are suffering whenever the student teacher takes over the class. The coordinator feels caught in the middle, torn by a growing sense of responsibility for student teachers and desire to honor the university partner's requests, and a concern for the students and teachers of the school.

Teachers have responded to these and similar challenges by developing a leadership style that is more collaborative than that of most traditional principals. N.S. Romerdahl (1991) describes how the teacher leader coordinators in the Puget Sound Professional Development Center were able to take leadership with their peers: Conscious of the schools' egalitarian norms and wanting to remain "one of the gang," they used flattery, "sweet talk," and gentle arm-twisting as forms of persuasion. They followed the path of least resistance, and asked for the cooperation of teachers whom they knew and trusted first, hoping others would follow. When necessary, they relied on the bureaucratic legitimacy of the larger collaborative governing board or the principal, telling colleagues that something had to be done because "they" required it. They listened well to the teachers, and attended to their feelings. Over time the Teacher Leader Coordinators established their own "aura" of leadership and legitimacy with their peers (Romerdahl 1991, pp. 7-10). Vivian Troen and Boles (1994b) describe a similar pattern of leadership in another PDS context:

> The new leadership paradigm that has emerged in the Learning/Teaching Collaborative [Brookline/Boston, MA] taps into the embedded norms of teacher equality and honors the norms of inclusivity, connectedness, and collaboration identified with the predominantly female teaching force. This new vision does not introduce career ladders or set up a limited number of roles that can be accomplished by only

> a very few individuals. It seeks to develop an interactive community for improvement. (p. 282)

These leaders serve as role models who facilitate the development of those around them by publishing in journals, presenting at conferences, facilitating staff development at school and college. They challenge the status quo by redefining good teaching as more than just direct services to students and they have expanded influence on domains outside the classroom (Troen & Boles 1994b). They implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, change their relationships with the principal, often challenging the principal to take on new roles as well.

Changing Relationships with Principals

A school that is striving to meet most or all of the four common PDS goals will need as dramatic a shift in principal leadership behaviors as it does in teachers. Several aspects of being a PDS impact the roles and expectations of principals: the emphasis on pre-service and in-service professional development makes principals not only facilitators of their own staff members' learning, but of their roles as mentors and guides for others. The engagement in inquiry over best practice, and taking seriously the commitment to provide quality learning experiences for all children turns principals into curriculum developers and researchers, or supporters of their staffs in these efforts. As Peter Wilson (1993) points out, these changes require a fundamentally different view of the role of the principal: "Traditionally, principals have exercised control by limiting access to information in a hierarchical organization. Teachers engaged in action research, creating knowledge, and collaborating directly with university faculty will be empowered. They will require a new kind of leader, one who is empowering and enabling" (p. 229).

The direct collaboration of teachers with university personnel and other outsiders can alter the structural and relational contexts of the school. In one dramatic example of this, the teachers of a junior high school who had complained for years about their principal applied to become a PDS "to place their school under public scrutiny so their complaints to the Central Office would have to be taken seriously. As one teacher put it, 'You can't have a Professional Development School and have a bad principal'" (Muchmore & Knowles 1993, p. 7). The teachers' effort was successful and they describe with satisfaction how formerly principal-dominated meetings were "opened up" by the presence of four university staff members and a district assistant superintendent, starting a process that ultimately did lead to the principal's early retirement. This extreme example highlights the types of changes in relationship that occur, usually more subtly in PDSs, as the expanded roles of teachers and others and the collaboration with partner institutions shape the type of leadership PDS principals take. The changing roles, shifting power, and altered responsibilities among the teachers, principals, and university personnel involved in a PDS are intimately linked.

Roberta Trachtman and Marsha Levine (1994) use several metaphors to describe the changes involved in a PDS bring to the role of the principal. They describe the roles of effective leaders: **storytellers**, who help people create meaning in their work, promote the change process, and link participants in each of the partnering institutions; **gardeners**, who protect innovators from naysayers and provide resources for growth and development; and **jugglers**, who balance the demands of conflicting constituencies by holding fast to their vision. Perhaps the most apt metaphor is their last: **jazz musicians**, who listen to all the players, improvise and experiment with new ideas, and share leadership while retaining a direction set by some guiding principles. The last is a particularly powerful image, conjuring up as it does schools as places where leadership is shared and rotated in significant ways. The jazz musician metaphor illustrates a high mutual interdependence, where changes in principal leadership are necessarily linked to changes in teacher leadership (and to changes that have not been discussed in this paper, in leadership roles at the university). Taken together, they constitute the transformation of school leadership that is caused by, and necessary for, successful implementation of the professional development school model.

But where do teachers learn all these skills for these new roles? And how do they sustain themselves through the inevitable loss of competence and confidence that can be expected in a change of this magnitude (Bolman & Deal 1991)? Excellent classroom teachers may find themselves floundering on some of the inter-organizational issues, or in working effectively with principals, or former professors at the university. To take on these tasks effectively, teachers need skills that formerly only principals had: budgeting, staff development, evaluation, and so on. But the PDS context also requires skills that are new for many principals as well: knowledge and skills in developing partnerships, creating communities, dealing with the change process, working with diverse stakeholders, conducting research, evaluating programs, and supporting others in doing so. Furthermore, because they are teacher leaders and not principals, they need to develop additional skills in negotiating the fragile balance in their relationships with their colleagues (Little & McLaughlin 1993).

Unfortunately, emerging teacher leaders in PDSs are usually no better prepared for their roles than teacher leaders historically have been: "In the past, teacher leaders' successes or failures were due more to context, previous experience, and personal characteristics than to any formal efforts to provide them with appropriate leadership skills. Teachers have been expected to have the necessary skills on entry into leadership positions, or to develop them on the job" (Gehrke 1991, p. 1). The preparation and support available to experienced and pre-service teachers for these role changes is discussed below.

Part II: The Preparation and Support of Teacher Leaders in PDSs

Preparation and Support for Experienced Teachers

To be effective in these new roles, PDS teachers need organizational supports as well as the opportunities to learn and practice new skills. Organizational supports include:

Time—Teachers need time outside of class for other leadership work in the PDS. The first thing that teachers did in the PDS case study described by Sharon Rushcamp and Laura Roehler (1992) was reorganize the schedule to free up a 75-minute lunch once a week to permit the discussion of issues necessary to develop a PDS. However, although the Teaching and Learning Collaborative (Brookline/Boston) uses team scheduling to provide participating PDS teachers with one day a week of alternative professional time (Boles 1994) and there are other reports of reallocated time (Putnam 1993), these are atypical—more commonly most of the work is done by teachers on top of their normal teaching assignments (Grossman 1994).

Support for role change—For teachers this means changing the expectations and definitions of the teacher's job, so it is not solely direct service to students. This may involve educating parents, colleagues, other administrators that involvement in leadership activities is a legitimate part of a teacher's role.

Revised reward structures—For teachers, the intrinsic rewards of PDS work include increased expertise, efficacy, collegiality, and self- renewal, while the extrinsic rewards are power (through involvement in decision making), status (through presenting at conferences, and being recognized as resources by the university, for instance), and extra pay (for meetings held after school). Although the increased pay was not significant, it had high symbolic value (Sandholtz & Merseth 1992). These psychological and financial supports for the risktaking and the time that is put in are important factors in sustaining involvement of teachers in new leadership behaviors.

Leaders also need opportunities to learn and practice new skills. Despite the pressures of these transformed roles and the myriad of things teachers need to know and do to be effective in them, there is usually little to no formal preparation or support for teachers taking on new leadership roles. Virtually all of the learning is on the job. For a few aspects of the emergent teacher roles, participating universities offer courses—for instance, in observation and feedback or supervision skills for mentor teachers, or in research skills as part of an action research project (Sandholtz

& Merseth 1992). Overall, however, instead of providing any training or guidance, most schools and school systems make the presumption that teachers, administrators, and university personnel have the needed knowledge and skills.

In some instances, networks promoting PDS have made a conscious effort to provide preparation and support for leaders. For instance, the Michigan Partnership offers training in process skills like conflict management for teachers, principals, and other PDS stakeholders (Grant 1994). In Massachusetts, the State Department of Education provides several days a year of skill training for PDS partnership participants in the Turning Points Project, usually in the form of networked opportunities for "job-alikes" to meet and share strategies with others (Teitel 1994). But again, these are the exceptions and are not typical.

Preparation and Support for Pre-Service Teachers

One of the most exciting aspects of professional development schools is their potential to induct new educators into the profession in ways that recognize and prepare them for different norms of collaboration and leadership:

> PDSs struggle against traditional school norms as they offer the possibility for socializing new teacher to different set of expectations about practice within and outside the boundaries of their classrooms.... If PDSs become the doorways that all new teachers pass through as they launch their careers, they can transform the culture of teaching and the expectations for collaboration along with the nature of teaching and learning in individual classrooms. (Darling-Hammond 1994, pp. 8-9)

Indeed, teachers who do their pre-service work in a PDS appear to be getting the socialization Darling-Hammond calls for. At Fairdale High School in Jefferson County, Missouri, teacher candidates get welcomed into all aspects of school life. They develop relationships with principals, special education teachers, secretaries, other teachers on site-based decision making teams. Teacher candidates work on projects that overlap with and support the school's restructuring agenda, getting immersed in the real work of the school (Fischetti 1994). In the fifth year of their integrated bachelors/masters program at the University of Connecticut, preservice teachers do an administrative internship rotation with the principal or other school leader and get involved in planning some sort of school-wide project in addition to another practice teaching experience (Norlander *et al* 1992). These encouraging reports suggest the promise of PDS. However, since just a small fraction of teacher candidates are able to participate in this type of experience in a PDS, this potential is not yet realized.

Conclusion: Lessons about Leadership, Learning, and Professional Development Schools

Several lessons stand out. One is the importance of keeping principals and other administrators tied in and part of PDSs, not ignored or bypassed as they have often

been in the past. This is critical to avoid the perception by administrators that the emergence of teacher leadership in PDSs is a threat. A second is the importance of avoiding the assumption that school teachers, administrators, or university personnel have all the skills and knowledge they need to work effectively in the PDS leadership arena. As Roland Barth puts it, "Coalition-building and the replacement of competitive relationships with collegial ones does not occur easily, let alone naturally. Schoolpeople need skills, insight, and vision that will equip them to assume responsibility for their schools. Such tools are seldom won through experience as classroom teachers or principals, or in courses of schools of education" (1990, p.11). Although the focus of this paper has been on school-based faculty, these comments apply equally to school administrators and to faculty and administrators of participating colleges and universities.

A third lesson is that there is still a great deal that is not known about where PDS leadership is going. Although it is clear that teachers and administrators need to know and do more to be effective in PDS, the knowledge base for this sort of leadership work is just emerging. PDSs are in various stages of formation and development. Few partnerships in the country have all the features that ideally characterize a professional development school, and there are no set minimum standards that must be met prior to using the PDS designation. Some partnerships call themselves PDSs but are really just clustered sites for student teacher placements with few, if any, of the shared governance and true collaborative features described here that create the conditions for and require new forms of leadership. In settings like those, there may be no transformation of leadership, because there is no real professional development school. Indeed, the studies cited in this paper, because they are written about PDSs along this spectrum of development, may be misleading or may get modified as more information comes in.

Despite these concerns and the developmental nature of this process, PDSs stand out as excellent learning laboratories that provide a supportive context for exploring these issues. One group of participants at a conference on emerging leadership roles in PDSs summed this up by noting that although "[t]here is not a clear body of knowledge to be learned," learning about leadership is critical and "has not been an explicit part of teachers' and administrators' roles." The group suggested two important guiding principles: that the learnings have to be negotiated in each setting among all stakeholders; and that "University and school people need to negotiate together with equal footing" (Cardwell 1994, p. 6).

Other recommendations that may serve to enhance the learning possibilities for PDSs include advice to those in PDSs to expect confusion, disruption, and lack of competence during these leadership changes and to expect some conflict and discord over the power and responsibility of the principal and the teachers. Emergence of teacher leaders can be seen as threat by principals, especially if they see power in schools as part of a zero-sum game—they may see increases in teachers' leadership roles outside the classroom as threatening (Troen & Boles

1994b). Similar tensions about power and authority may emerge if districts are increasing the individual accountability level for principals. Those involved in PDSs should put learning about leadership and about processes for working inclusively, collaboratively, and across boundaries high on the learning agenda for school as well as university faculty and administrators in the PDS. They should seek opportunities to find out more, particularly by sharing with people doing similar work in comparable PDSs. Networks can serve this purpose very well, and provide many other benefits to people in the pioneering work of building PDSs.

Those in teacher education and educational administrator preparation programs should look for ways to cross boundaries within their institution, by looking at the common core of understandings about leadership and organizations that are needed by teachers and administrators. Educators need to look at how processes within education and educational administration departments model and reinforce the status quo, and need to work to break down the patterns that compartmentalize inservice and preservice, teacher preparation and administrator preparation, and theory and practice. Teacher educators need to be aware of a tension that emerges when examining the realistic potential for having induction in a PDS shape new teachers coming into the profession. Although this has been shown to be an effective way of changing the norms of the preservice teachers, at present only a small percentage currently come through PDS placements, and most of them get first year teaching jobs in far more traditional schools. These placements in traditional schools can be a very disheartening process (Fischetti 1994) and the school and university components of teacher education programs need to work proactively to provide follow-up and support so new teachers are not quickly re-socialized into old norms.

Those in networks supporting the work of PDSs should seek opportunities to provide leadership development support for teachers, administrators, and university personnel. Networks can be particularly useful in providing a neutral space for the often conflictual learning process to take place. Networks can use job-alike sharing opportunities and case studies to facilitate the learning that is such a critical part of leadership development.

Epilogue

Roland Barth has suggested that the "key to improving schools from within lies in improving the interactions among teachers and between teachers and principals" (1990, p. 28). A professional development school provides an ideal context for doing this. But a PDS has the potential to go even further. When fully implemented as a partnership, a PDS creates an inter-organizational environment that can transform leadership at the school and at the university, while educators engage in the challenging but vital work of simultaneously renewing both institutions.

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