

# School–University Partnerships: What Do We Know and Why Do They Matter?

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**Abstract:** School–university partnerships are a fundamental link to strengthen teacher education reform. The formation of new partnerships in which academic faculty and in-service teachers assume expanded roles holds promise as a primary avenue toward developing content and contextual expertise of preservice music teachers and strengthening pre-K–12 students' learning. In this extensive review of literature, the authors discuss problems and possibilities of such collaborations in both general education and music education contexts. They propose a research agenda focusing on (a) the developmental nature of the collaboration process, (b) the quality of the process, (c) the outcomes of the process, and (d) the perspectives of all parties involved to examine the role of school–university partnerships in music teacher education.

**Keywords:** collaboration, music teacher education, partnership

Discussions of issues surrounding education reform are converging on institutions of higher education regarding school accountability, teacher training, and student outcomes. Conversations concerning educational reform in higher educa-

tion are not complete without addressing the efficacy of various collaborative models such as school–university partnerships in the education of highly qualified teachers. Music education is not immune to this conversation with the recruitment and retention of highly qualified music teachers as a primary theme in the profession. In light of this, Kimpton (2005) called for teacher education programs to expand content knowledge into context and experience. By presenting preservice music teachers with experiences similar to those of in-service music teachers, they become acclimated in the domain of music education and socialized into the profession (Alexander 2003). The formation of new partnerships in which academic faculty and in-service teachers assume expanded partnership roles and collaborations is one avenue through which to develop the content and contextual expertise of preservice music teachers (Burton 2005; Conkling and Henry 1999; Holmes Group 1990; Zimpher and Howey 2005). Partnerships and collaborations may hold the key for music teacher recruitment and retention (Robbins and Stein 2005).

As music teacher educators currently participating in school–university partnerships, we became curious about what conditions are necessary to ensure a successful partnership or are detrimental to

a partnership's success. We first looked at the historical nature of partnerships, then at best practices in the realm of general education, in which the nature of school–university practices have taken root, have been in existence longer, and are more prevalent, to uncover both the problems and possibilities of such partnerships. Our research began with an assumption that these findings might have implications for our practice and for music teacher education and retention. We compared our findings with what has taken shape in the field of music education to provide insight and present some of the challenges to implementation. Thus, this article explores the research on school–university partnerships and collaborations in teacher education and music teacher education. We also provide recommendations for practice and conclude with suggestions for research.

## Rationales for Educational Partnerships

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, a comprehensive report on the state of education in the United States (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983). This influential document spawned further reports on educational reform. Regarding teacher

education, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986) released *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century. The Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession*. This report addressed the need for fundamental restructuring in teacher education. To raise teacher education standards, the forum proposed strengthening educational preparation by requiring a bachelor's degree in the arts and sciences as a prerequisite for the professional study of teaching. Professional education courses would then be placed at the graduate level with prospective teachers participating in clinical internships.

At the same time, the Holmes Group, a coalition of major research universities incorporating professional schools of education was formed to address the trends eroding the effectiveness of teacher education and the subsequent need to make schools of education matter to both higher education and the profession. In three reports, the Holmes Group outlined goals for teacher preparation (Holmes Group 1986), the design of professional development schools (Holmes Group 1990), and the design of schools of education (Holmes Group 1995). *Tomorrow's Teachers* (Holmes Group 1986) put forth five goals representing the Holmes Group's vision of good teaching. In particular, the fifth goal called for schools to become better places for practicing teachers to work and learn:

Make partnerships with the teachers and administrators in particular schools. Develop these as Professional Development Schools—regular but ambitious public elementary and secondary schools where novice teachers learn to teach and where university and school faculty members together investigate questions of teaching and learning that arise in the school. (Holmes Partnership 2006)

The professional development school (PDS) was envisioned as a fundamental link to strengthen teacher education reform.

Goodlad (1991b) and his colleagues researched the conditions involved in teacher education and training in other professions that might be useful for teacher education at the Center for Educational Renewal at the University of

Washington. Their findings suggested that teacher education suffered from a lack of prestige, a lack of program coherence, a separation of theory and practice, and was subjected to regulated conformity (Goodlad 1991b). In interviews with university administrators, they found that teacher education was not a high priority of their respective institutions. School-based cooperating teachers and campus-based supervisors rarely came together to discuss a shared vision for student teaching. Goodlad's research discovered that in many instances university professors felt their teaching was undone by the student teachers' school-based experiences. They looked to school-university partnerships as a key to both school renewal and the preparation of those who are involved in schooling.

Five years later, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF; 1996) reported that many of the country's teacher education schools and programs were rooted in old concepts of learning. According to Darling-Hammond (1997b), "Effects of teacher expertise are so strong—and variations in preparation so great—that they account for most achievement differentials among white and minority students" (5). Most teachers entering the profession are inadequately prepared with few opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond 1997a). The commission found that most district-based professional development is weak and not focused on helping teachers learn the more sophisticated strategies needed for our diverse and complex society (Darling-Hammond 1997a). To that end, the commission suggested that professional development be embedded in the daily work of teachers through joint planning, peer coaching, study groups, and research. The commission's goal was to put a quality teacher in every classroom by 2006 (Darling-Hammond 1997a; NCTAF).

Now a decade later, Arthur Levine, former president of Teachers College, Columbia University, and a member of the Education Schools Project, wrote of the disparaging state of teacher educa-

tion in his controversial report, *Educating School Teachers* (2006):

The task before us is to redesign teacher education for a new era—to produce a greater number of high quality teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to raise student achievement to the highest levels in history. Unfortunately, educators and policy makers disagree fundamentally about how to accomplish the task at hand. There are conflicting and competing beliefs on issues as basic as when and where teachers should be educated, who should educate teachers and what education is most effective in preparing teachers. These differences undermine successful teacher education reform. (12)

Levine also provides guidance for teacher education in the following:

What excellent teacher education programs can and should do is prepare teachers for the realities of today's classrooms. They should educate teachers for a world in which the only measure of success is student achievement. They should educate teachers for subject matter mastery, pedagogical consequence and understanding of the learning and development of the children they teach. (104)

Levine concluded the report with five recommendations for strengthening teacher education, the first of which deals with transforming teacher education into professional schools focused on classroom practice. Within this recommendation, he cites the Holmes Group report (1986), *Tomorrow's Teachers*, and the development of PDSs "to be the strongest bridge between teacher education and classroom outcomes, academics and clinical education, theory and practice and schools and colleges" (105).

From this brief survey of educational reform, it is clear that the state of teacher education reform is troubled. However, agreement exists between reformers regarding the need for educational partnerships and collaborations. Cohesive, long-term clinical experiences focused on preparing teachers for the diversity of our society in a manner that trains students for the complexities of the twenty-first century are a critical component to reform (Abdal-Haqq 1989, 1998; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy 1986; Goodlad 1991a; Holmes Group 1986; Holmes Partnership

2006; Levine 2006; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE] 2001; NCTAF 1996).

### A Collaborative Model: The PDS

Looking to the medical profession and the blending of theory and practice between the university medical school and a cooperating hospital as a model, the PDS was proposed as a route to teacher education renewal (Darling-Hammond 1997b; Goodlad 1991a, 1991b; Holmes Group 1986, 1990; NCATE 2006; NCTAF 1996). A PDS is an educational collaboration that uses resources, power, authority, interests, and people from separate organizations to create a new organizational entity for the purpose of achieving common goals (Rice 2002). University and school personnel are the primary stakeholders of the PDS (Abdal-Haqq 1989; Holmes Group 1986; Holmes Partnership 2006) with community representatives, school districts, and government officials frequently included in the planning and implementation of the partnership (Clark 1999). These collaborations call for shared decision making in planning, implementation, and evaluation by participants at all levels (Hord 1986) and should have clearly established agendas to engender educational change (Goodlad 1991b). Within a PDS, partnering institutions share responsibility for the following four purposes: (a) maximizing student learning and achievement through the development and implementation of exemplary practice; (b) engaging in sustained inquiry on practice for the purpose of enhancing exemplary practice and student achievement; (c) engaging in meaningful, ongoing professional development; and (d) preparing effective new teachers (Abdal-Haqq 1998).

No one-size-fits-all formula is available for the development of PDS sites. Lieberman and Miller (1990) consider a professional practice school as part of the public school system governed by local boards of education as opposed to university lab schools, which operate independently of school boards. Using medicine's teaching hospital as a model, the goal is to build on the

interdependence of teaching and teacher education to create a new structure that brings practicing teachers, administrators, and university faculty together to train new teachers (Abdal-Haqq 1989; Sedlak 1987). The nature of each site as context specific encourages participants to be both responsive to the needs of the community and flexible in how educational issues are handled, and it necessitates that each PDS site is individual and composed of different

and learning are not viewed as separate functions (Lieberman and Miller).

### Partnerships in Education: Problems and Possibilities

Collaboration, shared decision making, and contextualizing teacher learning are cornerstones of school-university partnerships (Grundy, Robison, and Tomazos 2001; Lieberman and Miller 1990; Marlow and Nass-Fukal 2000; Teitel 1997). However, because of the nature

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organizational structures and curricular priorities (Holmes Group 1990). The similarities are that the teacher's role is changed and connections are made with the community.

Goodlad (1991a) believes there should be a clearly defined agenda whose purpose is not to solve all the educational problems of schools or train new teachers but to bring together two institutions that, through their mutual needs, can work toward bringing about change. He outlines the need to identify exemplary sites, create internships, develop curriculum, and implement site-based staff development. He cautions that, "A school university partnership is not a project; it is a way of life" (61). According to the National Network for Educational Renewal (2005), at the present time there are twenty-four sites in twenty states and one Canadian province.

Lieberman and Miller (1990) suggest that PDSs should promote the notion of teacher as researcher and should be settings in which teachers conduct research by and for themselves, sometimes working with university faculty and sometimes alone. These sites are developmentally focused, assuming that children enter schools with prior knowledge. Learning is viewed as a creative, constructive process in which content and skills are interconnected. Teaching

of collaboration, problems are likely to be encountered as participants negotiate their respective places within the partnership. In this section, we address some of the problems inherent in the design of partnerships and possibilities and benefits that exist for stakeholders.

In many instances, the university assumed the dominant role because many of the partnerships were formed with the idea of creating sites for student teaching, therefore, serving the needs of the university over the needs of the school. Johnston et al. (2002) found that in the traditional student teaching model many of the reform efforts and professional standards that were being promoted in preservice teacher preparation at the university level were inconsistent with what students were experiencing in practice. The result was that many novice teachers felt that their undergraduate education did not prepare them for the real world of school. However, when the role of partnering teachers at PDS sites is that of a coaching model of supervision and partnering teachers participate with student interns and university supervisors in regular site-based seminars, theory and practice become more closely connected (Johnston et al.). This conclusion underscores Goodlad's (1991a) recommendation to develop equitable partnerships that

intentionally consider the interests of all stakeholders.

Tensions arise with cultural differences between schools and universities. Differing hierarchical structures result in school teachers experiencing anxiety because another adult is in their classrooms (Grundy, Robinson, and Tomazos 2001; Kochan 1999; Richmond 1996; Shinnars 2001). Shinnars discusses the need to recognize conditions that inhibit success, such as culture clash or turf protection, and determine how to offset the resistance for partnership success in terms of flexibility, patience, and the ability to break down preexisting stereotypes. The effects of partnerships may not be immediately observable or measurable, thus, it may take a long time before changes in the way participants think actually become evident in practice (Peters 2002).

Kochan (1999) cautions that these types of partnerships often face communication problems, encounter conflicting values, and demand an enormous consumption of time and energy. Peters (2002) points out the need to establish a clear understanding of the project and the role played by each of the participants. He suggests that roles need to be negotiated by all the participants rather than imposed by the expectations of the project.

School participants are often looking for an emphasis on practical applications to improve student outcomes, whereas university professors are focused on the teacher's learning by deepening content knowledge and underlying philosophical contexts, thus, creating a mismatch between each set of participant's goals (Marlow and Nass-Fukal 2000; Peters 2002). Peters observed that schools value the immediate and practical over the theoretical and that some teachers feel professional development should only take place during the school day. This was translated into a lack of interest for the various reading, writing, and research valued by the university participants. Although the goal for many of the participants of the study was to effect school-wide change, frequently the change was at the individual level and occurred over a period of several years (Peters).

In discussing their own partnership and why they feel it is successful, Mar-

low and Nuss-Fukal (2000) believe in building strong relationships and the validation of colleagues as equals. They discuss the need for all participants to construct knowledge together, which means breaking down the ivory tower image. A new school culture—centered on openness, trust, and collegiality—in which time is provided for inquiry and teacher learning takes place in context also needs to develop (Lieberman and Miller 1990). As trusting relationships are built, teachers' attitudes toward university faculty improve when mutuality is ensured within the PDS. Moreover, they feel that they have a voice in the collaboration when their expertise is honored through opportunities such as giving feedback to interns, designing college courses, and providing guest lectures (Teitel 1997; Yendol and Fichtman 2004). As partnerships are designed, leadership roles need to be intentionally constructed with collaborative opportunities for teachers and support from like-minded colleagues' institutions because the work they do often stands out from other schools in their district as being different and possibly threatening (Lieberman and Miller). Collaborative opportunities to support and encourage teachers to work toward changing their practice may need to come from the formation of networks and coalitions (Lieberman and Miller).

Because the university generally awards research and places less emphasis on the practical, an issue for many university professors is that the work they do in pre-K–12 schools is not recognized by their institutions as teaching or research (Beck and Kosnick 2002; Grundy, Robinson, and Tomazos 2001). Furthermore, PDS work for faculty is time consuming and challenging because university faculty directly participate in the PDS and take part in outside events, such as professional development and in-service trainings. Because of the extensive amount of time spent in the schools, faculty become distant from the university and academic community (Beck and Kosnick). PDS work is labor intensive for university faculty, especially those who teach full loads, advise majors, and supervise myriad

field placements—all with the expectation of maintaining a scholarly–creative trajectory (Howey and Zimpher 1989). Ginsberg and Rhodes (2003) contextualized faculty involved in PDS work best in the following:

Like other professionals, professors require psychological and professional safety to do their work well. When T & P criteria do not match new expectations about the nature of work, when evaluation procedures do not effectively document new kinds of work, when workloads for faculty who work in partner schools are higher than for those who do not, when working across two contexts (school and university) is not supported with extra financial or personal resources, it is surprising that so many university faculty seem willing to risk reinventing their professional lives to establish and sustain partner schools. (158)

The idea of PDS work expands and challenges underlying assumptions about the nature of university faculty roles in teacher preparation (Ginsburg and Rhodes).

### Benefits of Collaboration

When partnerships are well thought-out and designed for success, a number of benefits are possible for all participants from preservice teachers to university faculty. The bulk of research on PDSs has been conducted on preservice teachers. These studies indicate benefits ranging from teacher effectiveness in the classroom to becoming a part of the educational community (Castle, Fox, and Souder 2006; Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz 2003; Fang and Ashley 2004). Being in pre-K–12 schools longer than their non-PDS-prepared counterparts affords PDS preservice teachers more opportunities for planned and purposeful educational experiences in the field. In addition, they receive more feedback, supervision, and informal guidance, all of which develop a large repertoire of instructional, differentiation, assessment, and classroom management strategies (Castle, Fox, and Souder).

Because of the comprehensive nature of PDS work, preservice participants develop more insight into teaching children (Fang and Ashley 2004) and are more focused on their students and their

students' performance than those preservice teachers who have not participated in a PDS (Castle, Fox, and Souder 2006). Through their participation in the schools, they develop a stronger association between theory and practice and an understanding of curriculum as both academic and practical (Castle, Fox, and Souder). This may be due to their developing capacity for engaging in discussion and reflection on their evolving teaching practice (Castle, Fox and Souder). Furthermore, when action research is a goal of the PDS, preservice teachers are found to be better equipped to engage in critical inquiry and reflection on the complex nature of schools, curricular content, and students (Crocco, Faithful, and Schwartz 2003; Levin and Rock 2003).

Another benefit of PDS participation is that it encourages interaction with the school community. Because PDS participants tend to spend more time in the school setting, community involvement becomes a priority. As PDS novices become more involved in the fabric of the school and community, they gain a deeper understanding of school culture and function and build better relationships with students (Castle, Fox and Souder 2006). When participating in a PDS for a longer period of time, preservice teachers are more likely to assume additional responsibilities closer to the professional life of a full-fledged teacher (Marton and Saljo 1976). They are also more likely to be viewed as co-teachers rather than as student teachers, thereby increasing their credibility (Crocco, Faithful, and Scharz 2003).

Whether PDS collaborations are long-term or short-term, when structured appropriately, they provide the capacity for preservice teachers to grow in professional knowledge, wisdom, and confidence as they gain self-efficacy as teachers. Developing increasingly sophisticated conceptions about the teaching and learning process is a potent outcome for interns of PDS collaborations (Abdal-Haqq 1998; Castle, Fox, and Souder 2006; Fang and Ashley 2004).

PDS-prepared teachers appear to have a lead over those novice teachers prepared through more traditional avenues. When studying the teacher effectiveness

of PDS-prepared and campus-only prepared teachers, Ridley et al. (2005) found that participating in a PDS accelerates the developmental progression from preservice to novice teacher. In this two-year study, PDS graduates were better prepared and displayed more confidence, making them less likely to experience culture shock as they embarked on their teaching careers. According to Ridley and others, the most striking difference between the two groups was that in the first year of teaching PDS graduates scored significantly higher on teaching effectiveness and were more concerned with their instructional impact on their students. They also tended to spend a greater percentage of their instructional time with students on productive instruction (as opposed to classroom management) than their campus-only prepared peers. PDS graduates felt they were agents of change and in turn principals and colleagues regarded them as agents of reform. PDS graduates are in high demand by school principals who view them as better clinically prepared (Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz 2003; Ridley et al.).

The research also indicates that in-service teachers are more likely to improve their teaching practice when participating in a PDS in which teaching responsibilities are shared between teachers, university faculty, and preservice interns (Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz 2003; Teitel 1997). This may be due to the intentional design of the partnership or a reduction in the student-teacher ratio created by the presence of interns and university faculty in the classroom. Having more hands affords teachers time to reflect on their teaching practice and implement new instructional strategies often shared by interns or university faculty (Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz; Leo-Nyquist and Rich 1998; Teitel; Trubowitz and Longo 1997).

Furthermore, PDS teachers are more apt to continue with professional development and seek collaborations outside of school (Burton 2005; Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz 2003). While conducting action research is a goal of the collaboration, teachers who participate in partnerships emphasizing

action research and developing reflective practice make more effort toward conducting action research within their own classrooms (Crocco, Faithfull, and Schwartz; Levin and Rock 2003; Teitel 1997; Yendol and Fichtman 2004).

In higher education, faculty who participate in PDS work develop stronger connections between real world teaching contexts and methods courses (Trubowitz and Longo 1997). In their work on faculty involvement in PDSs, Beck and Kosnick (2002) learned that through purposeful involvement with teaching in a PDS, school-university partnerships are strengthened and campus programs are enhanced. As faculty participate in the PDS they gain familiarity of the nature of schooling to better understand the challenges preservice and in-service teachers face. In addition, university faculty improve their approach to the practicum and their teaching practice as the collaboration engenders more awareness of the educational process, particularly as difficulties and successes in schooling are encountered (Beck and Kosnick 2002; Teitel 1997; Trubowitz and Longo). A basis for dialogue with preservice teachers is formed and sound teacher-student relationships are modeled when faculty are directly involved in a PDS (Beck and Kosnick). Through their participation in PDS work a more coherent and rich learning experience is provided for preservice teachers (Darling-Hammond 1999).

The shift of American education to outcomes assessment indicates the need for teacher education to place a higher emphasis on the effect of preservice teachers on student learning (Levine 2006; NCATE 2006; Teitel 1997). Yet, "[t]here is virtually no information on what aspects of teacher preparation make a difference in student performance" (Loeb and Reininger 2004, 23). Research on the effects of PDS collaborations on pre-K-12 students is scarce and demands attention (Grossman and Stodolsky 1994). The meager results that do exist on PDS and pre-K-12 student outcomes indicate that these students have more focused attention because of higher teacher to student ratio (Leo-Nyquist and Rich 1998) and that novice teachers who participated in

a PDS realize more student achievement than those who did not (Castle, Fox, and Souder 2006).

Placing pre-K–12 students at the center of PDS work is stated to be a critical component of PDS partnerships (NCATE 2001). Collectively, NCATE and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment Support Consortium (INTASC; 1992) have placed more emphasis on developing teachers who have a positive impact on pre-

year after the first Holmes Group Report by the Task Force on Music Teacher Education (Olsen 1987). The authors envisioned partnerships that would revitalize and strengthen music teacher education through cooperative endeavors. A key aspect for these partnerships was the participation of the in-service music teacher. However, two years later, Warren (1989) found that few university music education professors were participating in collaborative work. In 1995,

only one) within a school setting, they adopted the label of professional development partnership (PDP), although the principles of a PDS remain essentially the same. Conkling (2004, 2007) describes a typical format for this type of partnership as the assignment of a small cohort of preservice music teachers, under the auspices of both in-service and university music educators, in a school for two extended periods per week during a semester. The model is that preservice music teachers will experience several PDP sites prior to the professional semester (Conkling 2007). Bresler (2002) coined the phrase *professional practice zone*. Whatever the partnership is called, it appears that for music education, although it may be unrealistic to expect to be part of schoolwide reform, as is the case with a PDS, partnerships at the individual teacher and teacher-educator level can still be beneficial for the participants.

Much of the literature on school–university partnerships is focused on the socialization process of becoming a teacher as one of the aspects of indoctrination into the profession that cannot be adequately captured in methods classes. As suggested by Johnston et al. (2002) and Conkling and Henry (2002) socialization is one of the ways of developing a teacher identity. Operating on the premise that learning how to teach occurs in authentic contexts, situated learning for preservice music teachers includes (a) access to exemplars of music-teaching practice, (b) engagement in productive music-teaching activity, and (c) collaborative reflection (Conkling 2007). According to Conkling (2004), music teacher identity takes shape in authentic contexts. Her extensive work in documenting preservice teachers in PDPs forms the basis for the following conclusion:

To be sure, identity stories that arise in professional development partnerships are many and frequently modified. Critical to their shaping and reshaping are not only the observations of teaching and acquisition of experience in an authentic school context, but also the interpretation of observations and experience.

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## Successful partnerships engender better articulation between university courses and field placements.

K–12 student learning: “Candidates for all professional education roles are expected to demonstrate positive effects on student learning. Teachers and teacher candidates have student learning as the focus of their work” (NCATE, 22). PDSs offer the context from which to realize the impact of preservice, in-service, and faculty effect on pre-K–12 student learning.

Successful partnerships engender better articulation between university courses and field placements. They also provide opportunities for preservice teachers to apply the instructional strategies introduced in methods courses into authentic contexts. Collaboration between in-service and university faculty mentor teachers who support the preservice teachers in their efforts at constructivist, student-centered learning approaches characterize these approaches. Research has provided insight on the design and implementation of successful partnerships in general education. We explore partnerships and collaborations in music education in the next section.

### Partnerships in Music Education: Problems and Possibilities

The notion of collaboration in music teacher education was conceptualized a

Gregory conducted a survey study ( $N = 204$ ) to investigate the extent and nature of school–university collaborations in music. He discovered that 97 percent of the respondents were involved in some type of school–university partnership, yet they varied in the degree of collaboration. Participants indicated that benefits such as better field experiences for preservice music teachers, teacher effectiveness for graduates, higher education faculty more aware of K–12 school realities, and a reduced image of ivory tower elitism resulted from their participation. University faculty also reported drawbacks such as heavy teaching loads, lack of financial support, difficulty in securing release time for school personnel, lack of recognition or rewards, undervalued off-campus work, and conflicting organizational structures between the two types of institutions. According to Gregory’s research, the nature of collaborations tended to benefit the needs of higher education.

Conkling and Henry (1999) proposed professional development partnerships as a new model for music teacher education. Noting that the traditional setting for a PDS is not realistic for music education because there are fewer music educators (often

Since interpretation takes place mainly through dialogue, in the conversations of the cohort group, those interpretations of teaching experience are also multiple and subject to change. (14)

The issue of socialization is problematic for beginning music teachers. Unlike general education, most schools, if they have a music program, have only one or two music teachers per school site, making it difficult to place one or more teachers per site. Music teachers experience more isolation than their general education peers and many first-year teachers have little contact with peers or experienced teachers who can nurture them, advise them, and collaborate with them (Ballantyne and Packer 2004; Bresler 2001; Conkling and Henry 1999; Krueger 1999; Morin 2000).

Several studies highlight the frustrations felt by beginning teachers regarding the discrepancies between their expectations of teaching based on the theoretical aspects learned in their classes and the realities and practical aspects they face when in an actual classroom for a sustained period (Ballantyne and Packer 2004; Legette 1999). Bresler (2001) speaks of the contradictions between the arts in schools and the structure of schooling, which can be a contributing factor to the inconsistency new music teachers experience between theory and practice. Bresler (2001) aptly points out, "Arts are acknowledged to be expressive; yet schools are disciplinary systems and typically abhor expression" (8). In addition, she discusses how from their beginnings, the arts in schools have never shared equal status with the academic disciplines. Coming from the university environment of intense immersion into the world of music, it is often a hard realization for some beginning music teachers that in many instances their function in the school is viewed as a means to provide preparation time for the academic teachers and to enrich holiday activities.

Many of those involved in teacher education, whether it is in the realm of general education or music education, strive to give students the kinds of experiences, knowledge, and skills that

will prepare them for what they will encounter in the real world. Although policymakers, administrators, and business leaders debate the importance of pedagogical knowledge versus content knowledge in the making of highly effective teachers, there are nonquantifiable qualities that go into the development of an effective teacher that cannot be learned from Praxis exams, books, lectures, or discussions. In his description of what led him from the traditional instrumental methods class to a collaborative partnership, Robinson (2001) states, "no amount of 'peer teaching' could prepare them for the kind of improvisational approach to teaching they would encounter in a more authentic setting" (22). Ballantyne and Packer (2004), discussing the overall satisfaction of music teachers with their preservice preparation and the need for reform in the music education curriculum, noticed that because of isolation, extracurricular music activities, and mismatched expectations, new music teachers focus on survival strategies rather than learning to teach more effectively. According to Robinson, teachers need to learn to be flexible, develop a large repertoire of teaching techniques and think in terms of lesson plans as guides for instruction much in the way jazz musicians use lead sheets. His experiences reflect the importance of methods students having a more sustained presence in a classroom and the value of collaborating with music teachers in a local school.

As Bresler (2002) notes, "Collaboration has not been part of the American educational system. U.S. schools are the epitome of individualism, reflecting larger cultural values" (18). In her research of schools that have successfully integrated the arts into the core curriculum, she noticed that the music teachers were typically not part of the academic collaborative process. Although she acknowledges the presence of individualism in music, she points out that collaboration for musicians is embedded in ensemble experiences (2002). At both elementary and secondary levels, she and her colleagues noticed that music was the least integrated into the curricu-

lum despite school structures that supported collaboration. Bresler's research, although focused on arts integration-based collaborations, provides several reasons for this that may provide insight for those schools contemplating some form of PDS type of partnership. At the curricular level she observed that music teachers are more focused on music as a set of discipline-based skills and are not as likely as their visual arts counterparts to frame the arts more broadly in their social and cultural contexts. The performance focus of most music programs, which center on the development of technical skills, tend to fit with institutional expectations and mesh with the school practitioner's performance and entertainment view of music (Bresler 2002). When instructional time is relegated to once a week for forty minutes and the holiday or end-of-year concert is the music teacher's version of the standardized test, one can understand the tensions involved for music teachers when faced with the prospect of a collaborative partnership.

Given the overall goals of a PDS as a means for systemic schoolwide reform and the issues specific to music teaching, is it possible to enter into an effective school-university partnership? As previously suggested (Conkling and Henry 1999; Henry 2001), a literal definition of a PDS is difficult to implement in music teacher training institutions. To implement a PDS model at a school site would mean that the music teacher must be willing to give up classroom instruction or podium time to provide students with valuable teaching experiences (Henry). Yet, the research suggests that when music teachers enter into a collaborative partnership with their university colleagues and students the relationship proves beneficial to both parties. Bresler (2002) cautions that collaborations are relationships between teachers and should not be imposed as one more thing for the teacher to do. Her research suggests that, when teachers engage in the collaborative process, they move from a framework of isolation to feeling as though they are part of a larger community. Her findings regarding issues for space, reflection, trust, shared decision

making, and monitoring one's subjectivity correspond with much of the general education research regarding school–university partnerships (Bresler 2002).

Conkling and Henry (2002) found that while being a part of a PDP teacher educators are more likely to question how learning is taking place and how student learning could be facilitated by the teacher intern. They are also more likely to question whether their theoretical knowledge is grounded in the realities of the contemporary school and whether their solutions to problems are contextually appropriate in their partner schools (Conkling and Henry 2002). For these partnerships to be successful the music teacher educator needs to understand the school culture and work toward bringing the school and university cultures closer together. Although they may not have all the answers when problems arise, collective questioning and probing with their students and partner teachers help them to arrive at solutions that benefit all (Conkling and Henry 2002).

When entering into a partnership, Leo-Nyquist and Rich (1998) offer the following design principles for successful collaborations. To ensure more buy-in from stakeholders, begin school–university partnerships as voluntary endeavors. It is important to build a shared vision for the PDS and consider how the PDS will benefit pre-K–12 student-learning outcomes. Discussions must also ensue regarding how faculty work will be viewed. Because inquiry is a core feature of PDSs, constructing ways to engage in collaborative action research needs to be intentional and purposeful. Time must be built in to have regular meetings to keep lines of communication open. Moreover, for successful school–university partnerships to be sustained, informal meetings and gatherings are important to keeping the relational element in the forefront as relationships are critical to the success of PDS work.

### **Recommendations for Research on Music Education Partnerships**

In their extensive critical review of literature on teacher retention, Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson (2005) lament the inability of current research on teacher

preparation or student performance to inform policy or practice in teacher education. This is in line with Teitel's (2001) conclusions from an NCATE-sponsored literature review on PDSs in which he calls for research representing more PDS programs and a much larger population of teachers to determine the relative effectiveness of PDS and campus-based teacher preparation programs. In music, Jellison (2004) highlighted the void in music education research as it relates to student outcomes in her MENC senior researcher acceptance address. She noted that although the profession eagerly engages in learning about techniques and methods for teaching music, what students learn in music classes is rarely a dependent variable in research. Little is known about the effect of music teaching on music learning both in teaching practice and in teacher preparation (Jellison). These conclusions cause the authors to consider the question of what research should be conducted on PDS work in music education to inform policy or practice? To that end, we provide guiding questions for a research agenda on school–university partnerships in music education. The following questions focus on preservice teachers, in-service teachers, higher education faculty, pre-K–12 students, and the effectiveness of school–university collaborations.

#### **Preservice Teachers**

1. What settings assist preservice music teachers to make connections between theory and practice?
2. As early career teachers, do PDS graduates produce larger student learning gains sooner than non-PDS graduates?
3. What is the extent to which PDS and campus-prepared music teachers develop or retain their skills in lesson planning, teaching effectiveness, and post-lesson reflection?
4. Are PDS-prepared music teachers more inclined to remain in the music education profession?

#### **In-Service Teachers**

1. What are effective ways for teachers to work with interns as mentors?
2. How can time be built into the col-

laboration for mentor teachers to talk with interns?

3. How can teacher mentors be supported by the university in their work with interns?

4. Are in-service music teachers more apt to engage in action research when it is a focus of the collaboration?

5. What are the outcomes, in terms of benefits or losses, that in-service music teachers realize as a result of participating in PDS work?

6. Does participation in PDS work have an effect on in-service music teachers' self-efficacy or their decisions to stay or leave the music education profession?

#### **Higher Education Faculty**

1. How can partnerships and collaborations in music education be addressed in the university climate of promotion and tenure? What support do music teacher educators need? What do institutes of higher education need to understand the importance of this work?

2. How might the development of teachers as researchers be fostered in music methods courses and carried into collaborations?

3. Does participation in PDS work improve music teacher educators' approach to the practicum? Do they become more effective in methods courses?

4. What are the benefits or losses that music teacher educators gain or lose as a result of participating in PDS work? What issues arise specific to music education?

#### **Pre-K–12 Students**

1. Is there a relationship between type of teacher preparation and the learning outcomes of pre-K–12 students?

2. What benefits do pre-K–12 students realize through PDS partnerships? Are there drawbacks to pre-K–12 students as a result of participating in a PDS?

#### **The Collaboration**

1. How can shared learning be best facilitated in the collaboration?

2. Do model school–university partnerships currently exist in music education? What aspects contribute to their success or failure?

3. What type of professional development fosters the success of PDS work?
4. Should a three-tiered system (intern, university faculty, co-op teacher) be required in the university setting?
5. What are the characteristics of a sustained music education collaboration or PDS?

Research efforts should include rural, suburban, and urban settings and address the following: (a) the developmental nature of the collaboration process, (b) the quality of the process, (c) the outcomes of the process, and (d) the perspectives of all of the parties involved.

The research on school–university partnerships is compelling with potent implications for music teacher preparation. As Dewey (1963) suggests “Everything depends on the quality of experience had” (27). In light of this, music teacher educators need to realize the possibilities that school–university partnerships hold and take the lead in creating such relationships. Furthermore, the impact and effect of these partnerships needs to be documented so that music teacher educators are informed about best practices in music teacher preparation. Rethinking music teacher education in the twenty-first century demands that music teacher education be driven by collaborative endeavors and experiences. School–university partnerships hold promise to be the strongest link in the development of all stakeholders involved in music education.

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