

**PDS- Fall 2016/Spring 2017
Summary of Year**

First, let me begin by saying that this was my first year as director of the PDS Grant and I found the challenge refreshing and exciting. The learning curve for some components of the grant was a little steep at times; however, it was a rewarding experience. There are a few changes I will definitely make next year (mostly keeping up with the paperwork), but for the most part I found this opportunity extremely beneficial in building relationships with key stakeholders for the sake of student learning at all levels. It was a privilege to be a part of this grant.

This summary was reported to the state department and made available to PDS partners.

1. Concord University's PDS partnership for 2016-17 began the year with 10 schools: Princeton Primary, Mercer Elementary, Athens Elementary, Sun Valley Elementary, Oakvale Elementary, Melrose Elementary, Bradley Elementary, Princeton High School, Pikeview High School, and Pikeview Middle School. Concord sustained a presence in each of the above mentioned schools during the 2016-17 academic year. Concord has established strong relationships with each of its partner schools through the years, and as a result we have strengthened the clinical experiences of our teacher candidates in numerous ways.

New Addition- After collaborating, visiting, and meeting with the principal and faculty of laeger Elementary School in McDowell County, we were able to add them to our PDS team. We are very excited to include a school from McDowell County, along with our schools from Raleigh and Mercer Counties, in our partnership.

2. CU teacher candidates were involved in numerous activities at PDS schools which allowed our candidates to work directly with the public school students and/ or participate in activities that were not necessarily related to their field experiences. These activities included:
 - a. Judging local and regional Science/Social Studies Fairs
 - b. Professional development with "Project Wet"
 - c. Working in after school programs
 - d. Participating and representing CU as members of a student panel at the 2016 Virginia Association of Teachers of English Conference in Hampton, VA
3. CU faculty were involved in a variety of activities that promoted and supported the relationships with public schools and enabled CU faculty to teach and work with public school students, as well as public school teachers. These activities included:
 - a. Providing embedded professional development at laeger Elementary School
 - b. Providing professional development workshops for Mercer County Teachers
 - c. Judging Science Fairs, Geography Bee workers, and Spelling Bee judges and readers
 - d. Attending and presenting at the WV PDS Conference with teachers from PDS Schools
 - e. Participating in and creating motivating activities for four "Concord Activity Days" which involved the students from four of our PDS schools: Mercer Elementary, Bradley Elementary, Pikeview Middle, and Melrose Elementary.

- f. Providing a beginning of the year luncheon for all PDS principals, public school liaisons, and CU liaisons. It was a great way to kick-off the new school year.
 - g. CU faculty liaisons maintain a presence at the PDS schools throughout the year. Many CU education classes are taught on-site at a number of the PDS schools.
 - h. Global Collaboration and Diversity Symposium 2017 highlighted the collaboration between education colleagues at Victory University in Australia and our teacher candidates enrolled in EPAT (Education Psychology, Assessment, and Technology). CU candidates shared their knowledge with presentations to students from our PDS schools.
 - i. Pikeview High School Lunchtime Book Club is collaboration between English education teacher candidates, Pikeview High School students, and Dr. Elizabeth Roth, and Dr. William Williams. Over the years the book club has grown and become a highlight for Pikeview High School students.
 - j. Two public school teachers (PDS liaisons, Brenda Thompson and Kayla Blankenship) taught lessons/presented to our teacher candidates on Concord's campus.
4. Offered the opportunity for public school teachers to apply for "Inquiry Grants" for action research projects in their classrooms. Each grant awarded was in the amount of \$500. The following grants were awarded.
- a. *"Manners and More"*- Teresa Inman, Oakvale Elementary School
 - b. *"Science Buddies for Children with Autism"*- Barbara Pettus- Princeton Primary
 - c. *"From Music to Math with the Beat of a Drum"*- Andrea Sullivan- Bradley Elementary School
 - d. *"Ice Dying and Erosion: Capturing Natures' Path in Textiles"*- Julie Midkiff- Bradley Elementary School
 - e. *"Crime Scene to Court Room"*- Leeann Taylor- Melrose Elementary School
 - f. *"Table Talk"*- Kayla Blankenship- Princeton Primary
 - g. *"Learning Math with OSMO Pizza"*- Heather Caron- Bradley Elementary School
 - h. *"Boldly Going Where No Class Has Gone Before"*- Terri Gunter- Bradley Elementary
 - i. *"Balance Balls"*- Brenda Thompson- Sun Valley Elementary School
 - j. *"Alternative Seating-Balance Balls"*- Dona Scarbro- Sun Valley Elementary School

I had the privilege of visiting some of these classrooms and it was apparent that the projects were beneficial, creative, and student-engaging.

5. Our PDS partnership enthusiastically **added two new innovative programs this year**. First, was the summer reading camp. The practicum for our reading specialist program offered a week long summer reading camp for students from five of our PDS schools. The camp hosted approximately 50 public school students and was held on CU campus from June 19-23. The CU graduate students, CU undergraduate teacher candidates, Concord faculty, and PDS public school students enjoyed a week long adventure of motivating children to read. It was an amazing week of collaboration on many different levels.

Since we live in an area identified as high poverty, many of our children do not have access to printed material at home. After receiving permission from June Robinson and Jack Wiseman to reallocate surplus funding from the PDS budget to cover some of the expenses of the summer reading camp, each

child received approximately 12 new books of their own to keep. They were thrilled. They could not believe they could take the books home. Some of their reactions were absolutely priceless! Additionally, we were able to purchase supplies for integration of the arts with reading.

Second, the PDS initiative teamed up with the CU Reading Council (made up of CU teacher candidates) to participate in a program which originated with the Reading Council called "Books at Birth." A new children's book is sent home with each baby born at Princeton Community Hospital with a note inside the book cover which reads, "Read to your child every day. -Concord University". Understanding that the baby will most likely attend one of our PDS schools in the future, we are getting an early start on promoting literacy and recruiting for Concord.

Goals for 2017-18

1. Multi-level, non-graded classrooms- CU faculty involved with the PDS partnership were invited to meet with the leadership and faculty at Oakvale School, one of our PDS schools, for the purpose of partnering with them as they pioneer and pilot multi-level, non-graded classrooms in kindergarten and first grade for fall 2017-18. We have had multiple meetings, researched the idea, and are currently in the process determining the best method for implementation.

Materials have been ordered to assist in the transition. All key stakeholders are eager and motivated to launch this undertaking as a new PDS initiative. Our goal is to support and promote this innovative idea and use our teacher candidates in the implementation process.

2. Increase our support and promote our new partnership with Jaeger Elementary in McDowell County. The distance will present some challenges, but we are currently designing a plan to meet that challenge.
3. Continue to support our PDS schools/counties through mentoring, professional development, assisting with public school endeavors, and increasing the amount for inquiry grants.
4. Target professional development schools for early field placements, methods block placements, and student teaching.
5. Watch for new ways of networking with the public schools, other colleges and universities, and community resources for the sake of improving student learning and preparing better teacher candidates.
6. Continue to be involved in summer reading camp with students from our PDS schools.