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A Study to Explore the Strategy of Field-Based Teacher Preparation:
Professional Development Schools

A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

by

Connie Wright

May 2009

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Keywords: Professional Development Schools, Preservice Teacher, Student Teacher, Diversity,
Mentoring

ABSTRACT

A Study to Explore the Strategy of Field-Based Teacher Preparation: Professional Development Schools

by

Connie Wright

The purpose of my study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of student teachers with varying levels of participation in professional development schools. The population in my study was the 2002 through the spring of 2006 kindergarten through 6th-grade student teachers from a small, private postsecondary institution. A requirement of the teacher education program was to complete sequential, field-based experiences in kindergarten through 6th-grade schools culminating in student teaching. My study included kindergarten through 6th-grade student teachers who had experienced a number of semesters in a Professional Development School (PDS) classified into 4 levels: (a) 0 or 1 semester, (b) 2 semesters, (c) 3 semesters, and (d) 4 semesters of field experience in PDSs of partnership.

Using analysis of variance procedures, the relationships between levels of participation in a PDS with each of 6 student performance measures were investigated. Several sources of data were used to evaluate the student teachers' performances. My study was based on the test results from 3 subtests of the PRAXIS II series examinations, the student teacher evaluation instruments, and the senior exit interviews. The performance evaluation scores were used to determine the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of every student teacher before graduating from the teacher licensure program at Lincoln Memorial University. Based on the analysis of the data and findings of my study, PDS field-based experiences appear to have no significant relationship

with student teachers' PRAXIS II examination subtests scores, student teacher evaluation instrument scores, or their senior exit interview scores.

DEDICATION

To aspire to leadership is an honorable ambition (1 Timothy 2:1 NEB). However, selfish ambition is not good for leadership of humankind. My desire is to use all learning experiences such as this one for worthy and honorable causes to serve others. I dedicate the success of this process and product to Jesus Christ, my amazing husband Donnie, and my loving daughter Shalom Wright.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Professional Development Schools (PDSs) offer preservice teachers field-based settings in which to interact with students, teachers, families of students, and university peers and supervisors. Preservice teachers are expected to be part of a collaborative instructional team actively making informed professional decisions to improve their teaching and the education of the students they teach (NCATE, 2007). A highly qualified first-year teacher, according to current NCATE standards, should have varying levels of participation in diverse, collaborative field-based experiences throughout his or her teacher preparation program. Some reformers recommend using a specialized team approach for training teachers especially outside of the university classrooms.

American social change activists have reported that matters of immediate concern such as health care, the environment, war, and education remain highly critical issues in the United States. As for long-term problems that face our country, 21st-century Americans consider education as having the most profound and far-reaching effect on the character and educational development of children (Media and Policy Center, 2008). In a 2007 call to action for social justice by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the members of the education profession reaffirmed the decision made by *Brown v Board of Education* (1954) stating that a high quality education is a fundamental right of all children, and the most crucial determinant of receiving a high quality education is a well-prepared teacher (NCATE, 2007).

NCATE is a nongovernmental coalition of more than 30 national associations representing the education profession at large. NCATE is the accrediting body for colleges' and universities' teacher education programs providing accountability and standards of improvement for teacher preparation. (NCATE, 2008b). Central to NCATE's new millennium mission is the focus on reform in teacher preparation. This focus enhances the implementation of performance-based standards requiring compelling evidence of effective preservice teachers' assessments of

the subject matter they teach and whether they can teach effectively so that all students learn in field-based settings.

According to NCATE Standard 3, performance-based field experiences are schools connected to the teacher education program that provide well designed opportunities to learn by doing (NCATE, 2007). All NCATE approved teacher education programs must allow preservice teachers to participate in diverse, field-based, and on-the-job teaching experiences. Field experiences allow preservice teachers to apply theory in the prekindergarten through 12th-grade classrooms and to practice and reflect on their content, pedagogical knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions with mentoring teachers. Teacher preparation programs use formative and summative assessments of the preservice teachers' performances according to their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions. The infrastructure of a quality teaching environment include the learning community, internal and external collaborative efforts, student and teacher accountability for quality assurance, the knowledge of the learning organization, roles, and structures, and appreciation of diversity characterized by norms and practices that support equity and learning by all students and adults. Quality teachers and the higher standards driving teacher preparation are difficult to define because of the ever-changing needs of a complex society with a growing diverse student population. Today's reform movements call for higher standards of teacher quality and teacher preparation. Literacy goals of teachers in the 21st century include mastery of complex language and digital media skills. Teacher academic ability, types of teacher preparation experiences, and the knowledge and skills to create differentiated lessons for a diverse student population are all part of the verbiage of restructured teacher education programs. Well prepared kindergarten through sixth-grade elementary school teachers are thought to be those highly skilled in all content knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions (NCATE, 2007).

Since the educational reform movement in the late 1980s, there has been a growing body of researchers who have argued that preservice teacher preparation programs fail to ensure the quality of teacher graduates and, overall, produce inadequately prepared teachers (Andrews,

2000; Rubenstein, 2008; Salvato, 2005). The assumption has been that having a high quality teacher is the single most important factor concerning student success. The current problem with teacher training is relative to the different perspectives of society, NCATE, prekindergarten through 12th-grade institutions, professional teacher training programs, preservice teachers, and other organizations. One perspective of current teacher education training comes from preservice teachers who claim hypothetical lessons are often taught to peers based on a theoretically perfect classroom situation where no classroom management problems arise and all students are functionally the same and speak English. Because many lessons are hypothetical, preservice teachers rarely learn how to modify for diverse learners because of a lack of real-world application (Rubenstein).

Researchers of teacher education reform have studied approximately 1,200 college and university teacher education programs. Cibulka, the 2008 president of NCATE, stated that the crucial pieces needed to improve the training quality of teachers were through research evidence and collaboration. Cibulka wrote that he supported the strengthening of collaborative partnerships with school districts that focus on student learning (as cited in Thomson Reuters, 2008).

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence (2004) is a nonprofit, volunteer citizens' organization advocating for school improvement, reform of curriculum, governance, and finances of Kentucky's schools and higher education. The committee supports the *Kentucky Education Reform Act* (KERA) of 1990 that has been heralded as the most sweeping educational reform act throughout the history of the United States (University of Kentucky, 2008).

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence (2004) cited slow reforms to teacher preparation programs because of low priority on campus, the lack of leadership in school reform (largely because of traditional certification), and teaching guidelines already in existence. According to Sexton (2008), the Aspen Institute group based in Washington DC reported in 2007 that significant improvement regarding teacher performance would require new approaches to the human capital management in order for a school system to clearly attain its mission and goals

and then align its partnerships with outside organizations and professional teacher training programs for student success.

As noted in *Quality Counts* by Sexton (2008), a group of nonpartisan volunteers examined a national reform research project for rethinking efforts to improve teaching and teachers known as the “Human Capital System.” This system was the focus of the 2008 issue of *Quality Counts*, a new report card assessing states across six areas of educational performance and policy. According to Sexton (2008), Swanson, the director of the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, reported that student learning in schools was the most important outcome of quality teaching by teachers. One crucial finding of *Quality Counts* focused on improving the teaching profession by determining what attracts people to teaching and how to build a talented pool of high quality teachers through teacher preparation and certification.

Despite years of critical analysis of the education domain and the preparation of teachers, attempts to improve schools and institutions that train them have continued to generate more research than concrete answers. There was no organized teaching profession or one single pattern of teacher preparation during the 19th century.

In the early 1800s, admissions into the teaching profession often included new teachers assuring questions about their moral character and, in some cases, passing a basic knowledge test in reading, writing, and arithmetic. In the mid to later part of the 19th century, most of the states required a locally administered test to obtain a state certificate. Often, the test covered the basics including grammar, spelling, and social studies such as U.S. history and geography. In the early days of teacher preparation, teachers were being prepared to enter small, rural schools that were often one-room school houses with small learning environments. School challenges were mostly based on the needs of an agricultural based community. The teacher and the school were closely connected to the community because the schoolhouse often served as a multipurpose building for church and community-based meetings. Rural American teachers had to live and work in their close-knit communities so their moral and academic reputations had to precede them. The learning environment often included grades 1 through 12 in one classroom so teachers had to

meet the basic academic needs of all ages. The assessment of student progress was limited to the teacher with little to no collaboration with other professionals (Ravitch, 2003).

Diversity in the 19th century rural classroom was demographically related because of the location of the school. Teacher training in normal schools began to emerge along with a few elementary methods courses. Urban schools conducted their own teacher development presented by experienced teachers. A form of informal teacher mentoring began between new and experienced teachers without recognition of its value for the training of future teachers. Some large school districts continued this trend well into the early 20th century. Rural and urban school boards took on the responsibility of offering local teacher institutes to help teachers with pedagogical issues and academic subjects (Ravitch, 2003).

The major changes in 20th century education occurred at the beginning of the 1900s. In the early 20th century, liberal studies faculty taught all university students preparing to teach the traditional disciplines of the liberal arts and sciences with little to no emphasis on pedagogy. Later, undergraduate and graduate schools of education attempted to establish a profession with its own common language, pedagogy, and preparation programs. Educators expanded and developed specialized studies in curriculum, administration and organization, psychology, and counseling. The effort to create schools of education caused a great division between professors of pedagogy and subject matter faculty members who had earlier taken a progressive role in 19th century education reform movements. Little consideration was given to the role of experienced elementary and secondary teachers who might assist with the training of future teachers (Ravitch, 2003).

As teacher colleges took charge of teacher certification, faculty members began to design their own pedagogical courses and required future teachers to pass state tests of pedagogical theory. State departments of education and the university schools of education agreed to longer periods of formal training in pedagogy including some limited field-based experiences. Instead of teachers gaining local certificates for the passing of subject-matter tests, formal completion of teacher education programs and state examinations were required. During the 1930s, the

American Council on Education established a National Teacher's Examination in reaction to teacher education program challenges (Ravitch, 2003).

According to Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996), concerns over the rising cognitive and diverse challenges of the classroom made an effective and quality teacher education become all the more pressing. There is a knowledge and diversity explosion influencing the nature of the classroom learning environment. Currently, U.S. teacher training programs are faced with greater preservice teacher challenges and accountability for student success. Yet, today's teacher training institutions are mostly traditional structures of yesterday's training programs with few major shifts in relationship to the needs of 21st century schools. Because of educational reforms, many urban and rural prekindergarten through 12th-grade learning communities have changed. Many teacher training programs have been left behind in the implementation of new reforms relating to public teaching practices, integration of intern and preservice teachers, collegiality, inquiry, and dissemination of new knowledge and practices (NCATE, 2008a). Prekindergarten through 12th-grade school improvement plans have demanded high quality teacher preparation regarding: (a) diversity training, (b) coursework restructuring, (c) parent engagement, (d) absenteeism, (e) health care, (f) brain-based content mastery, (g) Pk-16 collaborative field-based experiences, and (h) student assessment of Pk-16 learning (NCATE, 2008a). University-school collaborations might provide vital input for the way teacher training programs must change to help preservice teachers meet the needs of diverse prekindergarten through 12th-grade learners. Today's teachers must be able to successfully manage specialized learning environments, curriculum, instruction, and assessment for diverse student bodies in a myriad of rural, suburban, and urban learning environments (NCATE, 2008a).

Reformers such as Gitomer and Latham (1999) argued that all schools of education should hold every preservice teacher accountable to higher standards and performance accountability. These standards should include professional development in knowledge and application along with assessment of good teaching and learning practices such as development of all children, technology literacy, appreciation of diversity in the classroom, the ability to

create safe and effective learning environments, and to be known as content-pedagogical specialists. In addition, kindergarten through sixth-grade teachers are expected to use current, best teaching practices known to educators today (Gitomer & Latham). The state of Tennessee requires kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice teachers to complete an additional 18 hours in one or more areas of subject matter in order to complete the kindergarten through sixth-grade professional program of studies as highly skilled educators. Tennessee's kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice teachers are also required to pass a series of PRAXIS examinations once known as the National Teachers' Examination. The PRAXIS examinations test subject matter knowledge, pedagogical theory, and the principals of teaching and learning. Yet, 21st century education reformers such as Andrews (2000) and Rubenstein (2008) continue to characterize American teachers as woefully inadequate and they blame this condition partly on the caliber of preservice teacher education programs.

Background of the Study

NCATE's PDS field-based teacher preparation model has changed the notion of how to bridge the gap between the university and prekindergarten through 12th-grade classrooms to benefit preservice teachers, schools, mentoring teachers, and students (NCATE, 1998). PDSs offer significant educational opportunities for both the university and public schools. Meaningful collaboration involves systematic planning with a cadre of colleagues including school administrators, mentoring teachers, preservice teachers, students, school specialists, counselors, parents, and all other resource persons involved in the university-school partnership (Podsen & Denmark, 2000).

The principles, standards, and strategies of PDSs could be used to develop highly qualified teachers in supervised settings that enhance the achievement of prekindergarten through 12th-grade students. These classroom-based schools have been support networks for teachers, university faculty, administrators, preservice teachers, and the community where professional development, research, and inquiry are at the heart of the mission.

PDS teachers mentor preservice teachers by providing a variety of invaluable experiences including modeling effective teaching strategies, creating opportunities for shared inquiry, providing ongoing coaching, and sharing job responsibilities in a full-time classroom. NonPDSs are not designed with this same collaborative teaching and learning framework.

The intent of PDSs' collaborative setting is for the partnership to be designed with clear expectations and feedback for all stakeholders but especially for those in preservice teacher training. The use of aligned collaborative standards and the assessment of those standards for quality control are critical for assessing PDSs and their impact on preservice teachers' performances (Teitel, 2001). PDSs expose preservice teachers to trained professionals who can assist them with classroom problem-solving, content delivery, assessment, and management of the learning environment.

Statement of the Problem

Within the last 2 decades national and state guidelines have addressed the need for more structured university and school collaborative field experiences including shared research or inquiry, cooperative planning for instructional purposes, facilitation of curriculum planning, instruction, assessment, and professional development in regard to the preparation of America's future teachers. These formalized field experiences are typically referred to as NCATE's (1998) PDSs. There are many terms given to university-school partnerships; however, educators in the 1980s gave credit to the Holmes Group for popularizing the term "professional development school" (NCATE, 1998). Teitel (2001) pointed out that there are many names for university-school partnerships depending on the stakeholders' term preference. However, there has not been a universally agreed upon definition or set of standards that a partnership has to follow to be called a PDS. Teitel contended the main problem was quality control; there has been little to no use of common outcomes for quality control and this could be critical to assessing PDSs' impact on those involved. Nonetheless, according to Teitel, NCATE did suggest a core commitment to the PDSs' five critical attributes.

One goal of the restructured teacher preparation program has been professional development of preservice teachers provided by PDSs. Other than Likert-like scale instruments measuring the attitudes of the stakeholders and qualitative surveys asking their opinions, relatively few researchers have used meaningful groups for assessing a PDS's impact; likewise, few have tried to measure quantifiable outcomes or impacts of these schools (Teitel, 2001).

The purpose of my study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of student teachers with varying levels of participation in PDSs. Specifically, student outcomes were measured on the standardized PRAXIS II examinations, student teacher evaluation instruments, and senior exit interviews.

Significance of the Study

Training consisting of true collaborative field experiences has been rare for preservice teachers. There is a need for collaborative training efforts with pretrained mentoring teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders who can engage in unique opportunities to bridge the gap between the university and the school. Preservice students need a variety of differentiated teaching and learning experiences. Universities and schools need to collaborate on predetermined goals and skill sets for preservice teachers regarding planning, teaching, assessment strategies, practicing leadership opportunities, and building learning environments with technology.

Without well planned university school and field-based experiences, the preservice teachers' segue into the real world of practice seems to repeat trial and error patterns often resulting in intern teachers leaving the classroom after the 1st year of practice with feelings of negativity toward the teaching profession and their recent teacher training experiences (Rand Corporation, 2004). According to Reynard (2008), there has been much discussion about 21st century teaching methodology and learning especially concerning how to assess new knowledge construction, skills, and dispositions. Reynard proposed a different set of softer teacher training

skills such as team building, autonomy of the learner, technology-based communication and learning strategies, and critical and applied thinking skills.

Traditionally, university and school connections exist only in situations where preservice teachers search for any cooperating teacher in a reciprocating local elementary, middle, or high school system that will allow them to instruct isolated learning experiences (often disjointed) from their ongoing daily curriculum. The extent of traditional classroom mentorship by the veteran teacher usually has been limited to observing and assisting the preservice teacher with classroom management of students. Lack of explicit formative and summative evaluation indicators for measuring the strengths and weaknesses of all involved in the collaborative setting have been problematic factors. Other factors hindering the design and effectiveness of PDSs have been the lack of aligned standards, goals, and objectives for both the universities and the schools in collaboration.

Definitions of Terms

1. *Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)* is a consortium of state educational agencies and national educational organizations dedicated to the reform of preparation, licensing, and on-going professional development of teachers (INTASC, 2005).
2. *Professional Development Schools (PDSs)* are institutions created through partnerships among universities, schools, and other organizations to improve teacher preparation, professional development, and students' success as well as to promote inquiry through collaboration of university-school partnerships (NCATE, 1998).
3. *Preservice teachers* are teacher candidates enrolled in a college or university teacher educational preparation program (NCATE, 1998).
4. *Nonprofessional Development Schools (NonPDSs)* are schools that are not structured according to NCATE's PDS standards (NCATE, 2008a).

5. *PRAXIS Series II Examinations* are subject assessment tests that measure knowledge of specific subjects for K-12 educators including general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge (PRAXIS II, 2006).
6. *Student Teaching Evaluation Instrument* is Lincoln Memorial University's student teacher summative evaluation form completed by the supervising teacher. Senior exit interview scores used the student teacher evaluation instrument for the exit interview at the end of student teaching for students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs. The teacher's exit interview team is composed of university faculty members, student teachers' supervisors, PDS stakeholders, and nonPDS teachers (Lincoln Memorial University, 2004).
7. *Mentoring Teachers* are prekindergarten through 12th-grade teachers collaborating with colleges and universities in the preparation of new teachers (Mecca, 2008).
8. *Supervising Teachers* are kindergarten through sixth-grade teachers who supervise student teachers (NCATE, 2002).
9. *Student Teachers* are senior level students who have passed teacher education program criteria for admissions into enhanced student teaching (NCATE, 2002).

Research Questions

1. Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the three PRAXIS Series II examinations (Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011; Elementary School Content Knowledge 1014; and the Principles of Learning and Teaching) among students in the four levels of field experiences in PDSs?
2. Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience, at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience, and exit interview scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs?

Delimitations of the Study

My study was delimited to a small, private university's population of kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice student teachers enrolled in a teacher preparation program from 2002-2006. An additional limitation was the small number of PDS schools involved in the study. The results of my study may not be generalized to other populations.

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the study along with a background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, definitions of terms, research questions, and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 includes the review of literature associated with the study. Chapter 3 focuses on the population, instrumentation and measurement, data collection procedure, and research hypotheses. Chapter 4 provides the findings of the study, and Chapter 5 contains a summary of the findings as well as conclusions and recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The preparation of quality teachers begins with a quality teacher education program. Previous educational research has resulted in strong patterns of emerging themes and issues concerning the restructuring of teacher preparation programs. One important reform theme has been the value of training teachers in collaborative prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools and university field-based partnerships such as in National Council for Accreditation Teacher Education's Professional Development Schools (PDSs) (NCATE, 2008a). University and prekindergarten through 12th-grade school professionals have queried the impact of PDSs and other field-based experiences on the preservice teachers' preparation and performances. Proponents of PDSs have claimed that requiring preservice teachers to practice teaching and learning theories over time with effective mentoring teachers is a key factor in producing high quality, content-knowledgeable teachers (NCATE, 2008a).

Education reformers have agreed that engaging in collaboration between universities and public schools through the use of PDSs might be one way to improve tomorrow's teachers (Kennedy, 2000; Mecca, 2008; Teitel, 2001). PDSs provide mentoring teachers and preservice teachers the opportunity to make them equal partners in the search for quality teaching and learning. Included in this literature review is a summary of current literature related to PDSs, mentoring teachers, preservice teachers' training programs, NCATE's influence on teacher preparation, assessment, teacher attrition, diversity and teaching, preparation of preservice teachers in field-based environments, and changing practices of teacher preparation programs.

Curriculum: Changing Standards for Quality

As noted in Inger (1991), educational partnerships are imperative to comprehensive PK-16 educational reform efforts. University-school partnerships have resulted in both institutions

working together with shared outcomes to alter curriculum and pedagogy, to make connections between subjects, and to explore new relationships among public schools' and universities' teacher education programs. In the changing context of teaching, there have been new and more challenging sets of educational standards in the 21st century for both veteran teachers and preservice teachers; both must be exposed earlier to the learning expectations and performance of these standards. In *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB, 2002), one of the seven performance-based requirements was to boost teacher quality based upon a basic principle that teacher quality "is vital to close the gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice so that no child is left behind" (p. 1). In the *No Child Left Behind* summary of proposals for promoting innovation teacher reforms, it permits states and school districts to use grants and funds to promote innovative teacher preparation programs, to reform teacher certification or licensure requirements, and to establish mentoring programs.

Ambach (1996) expressed concern for unified standards to ensure that all students were being taught effectively. The PDS decentralizes the authority of teacher education programs by enlarging its boundaries of authority through shared visioning of the learning standards. Reforming preservice teachers' education has been a complex task because a single central authority does not set education policy. According to Ambach, large-scale changes of teacher preparation programs are only accomplished through a unifying vision with varied routes to realize the vision.

There have been many approaches in developing the careers of preservice teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium's (INTASC, 2005) is a consortium of state education agencies dedicated to the reform of teacher preparation programs and on-going professional development of teachers. INTASC is not a decision-making body; rather, it has maintained that authority resides within each state's governance structure. INTASC has used a holistic concept approach similar to NCATE to develop professional standards focused on 10 core principles as an impetus for systemic reform of teacher programs and guideline standards for all states. INTASC standards for preservice and beginning teachers have focused on the

elements of competent entry-level practices by assuming effective teachers recognize their students' strengths and weaknesses and know how to integrate content knowledge assuring that all students learn and demonstrate learning at high levels. According to Ambach (1996), some teacher preparation programs that use INTASC standards ensure the developmental consistency from preservice teacher education preparation to induction continuing throughout the teachers' careers.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 2001) during its 1998 biennial convention adopted official policy statements on teacher quality regarding strong induction and mentoring programs and insisted there must be high quality professional development and meaningful evaluation. They also suggested creating a seamless bridging of training rather than the traditional assumption that graduation from a teacher preparation program and licensure was the end of training for teachers. According to the AFT, there were so many demands on preservice teachers in obtaining their degrees that there was not sufficient time for them to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills necessary for complete independent practice of all that was expected. In comparison, AFT reported that other countries with high achievement by public school students inducted intern teachers into the teaching career through clinical real-world training experiences. The AFT cited a report from Darling-Hammond stating that attrition rates for beginning teachers with 3 to 5 years of experience lingered at 20% to 30% and that urban districts could experience as much as 50% attrition rates. Meaningful mentorship during induction has gone a long way toward retaining new teachers because inductees are able to develop and perfect their teaching skills under the mentorship of more experienced and skilled colleagues (AFT).

Andrews (2000) cited a convincing body of research that suggested preservice teachers taught the way they had seen modeled during their student teaching. Many teacher preparation programs occasionally have offered traditional prekindergarten through 12th-grade field-based experiences. Andrews compared these to a parachute drop where student teachers were dropped into classrooms with willing teachers. In addition, Andrews paralleled teacher education

preparation programs to an assembly line where preservice teachers were moved through a line adding to their foundation of education experiences. He proposed four ways to improve the education of preservice teachers:

1. get rid of the assembly line, piecemeal mentality of course-by-course preparation of teachers and replace it with collegial teams representative of teacher education faculty members across disciplines and K-12 exemplary teachers;
2. put student teachers in prescreened partnering K-12 schools that have a commitment to assist in the change of teacher preparation programs;
3. replace the piecemeal concept of learning by using the following process: Take a content class attaching a seminar on how to teach the content to K-12 kids (sic) with a simultaneous K-12 real classroom teaching experience for application of the content-methods; and
4. remove letter grades and replace them with a performance-based system that will demonstrate the understanding and skills acquired. (n. p.)

Assessment

Today's preservice teacher preparation programs typically use both traditional and nontraditional criteria for assessing the accountability of preservice teachers in order to reflect the diverse knowledge, skills, and dispositions of 21st century learners. After the mid 1940s, grade-point-averages and test scores were used extensively as indicators of who might become effective teachers without consideration to those who exhibited interpersonal and communications skills and other leadership qualities (Kennedy, 2000). Kennedy (2000) referred to Haberman and Godfried's position that a high intellect was essential for good teaching; nevertheless, the sole use of academic achievement and grade-point averages were inadequate predictors of successful teaching abilities. Several types of assessment criteria have been used to measure what preservice teachers know and what they can do. Teacher preparation programs have used these assessment data for reflection on preservice teachers' performance and impact on

students' learning. Typically, teacher education programs have monitored the preservice teacher's progress through the use of systematic benchmarks, gateways, or modules using designated assessment instruments with pre-established criteria for success. Teacher education faculties often have monitored changes in the preservice teacher's performance by collecting data and analyzing progress over time (Kennedy, 2000).

Reeves (2004) provided key indicators in holistic accountability of students in four areas: (a) teaching, (b) leadership, (c) curriculum, and (d) parent and community involvement. Reeves also declared that Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock reported a strong technique as consistent feedback that is accurate and timely in order to require the student to present complex ideas in a variety of ways.

Duncan (1997) stated that growth-oriented assessment systems affect all teachers because all teachers can improve some dimension of their teaching performance. Duncan proposed five main growth-oriented systems for the evaluation of teachers: (a) the purpose of the evaluation, (b) the target category of teachers assessed, (c) the conception of teachers' work, (d) judgments about which dimensions of teaching quality to evaluate, and (e) the approach to establishing the validity of the assessments. He categorized the teachers to be assessed and surmised that certification-seeking preservice teacher graduates should not have the same set of standards applied to them as should novice teachers or experienced teachers (Duncan).

Lyon, a research psychologist on education research and policies and the architect of *Reading 1st*, was an advisor to President George W. Bush concerning the reform of colleges of education (Salvato, 2005). According to Salvato, during a 2002 Council for Excellence forum, Lyon proclaimed out of frustration that if he could pass any legislation it would be "to blow up colleges of education because, in knowing what works and how students learn, there's a large distance between that knowledge and what teachers are actually given in teacher preparation programs" (p. 13). Billions of dollars have been spent on professional development of teachers because of the gravity of this situation. According to Salvato, Lyon asserted that colleges of

education were process-driven and not (student) outcome-driven with a greater emphasis on faculty rather than students in the colleges of education.

The PRAXIS II (2006) examination has been used throughout the United States as one acceptable criterion for certification and teacher licensure. PRAXIS II includes: (a) subject assessment tests that measure general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge; (b) the principles of learning and teaching test assessments that measure general pedagogical knowledge in grades kindergarten through 6, 5 through 9, and 7 through 12; and (c) the Teaching Foundations Tests that measure five areas: English, language arts, mathematics, science, and social science.

Danielson and McGreal (2002) proposed that the complexity of the teachers' evaluation system was more complex than the sum of its forms. As Reeves (2004) and Duncan (1997) surmised, there must be an identifiable and understandable domain of teaching (the “what”). To understand the standard for acceptable performance, there must be trained evaluators of students' performances based on evidence of teaching demonstrated in the procedures, and there must be a holistic assessment of techniques and procedures (the “how”) of teaching (Danielson & McGreal, p. 21). Danielson and McGreal discussed the factors contributing to the nature of professional learning for all teachers: reflections on practice, self-assessment, self-direct inquiry, and collaboration with others.

A key issue for evaluation of teaching outcomes emerged in Gomez, Bissell, Danziger, and Casselman's (1990) handbook for developing intersegmental, postsecondary partnerships. The first issue was that evaluation measures needed to be quantitative as well as qualitative. Specific partnership objectives must be stated in relation to measurable outcomes so that quantitative indicators can assess the progress of the partnership. Gomez et al. pointed out that qualitative measures such as interviews, logs prepared by participants in the partnership, external reports, and systematic observations were also necessary for measuring the fundamental changes of the partnership for sustained impact. Gomez et al. also found that the most profound impact

organizational behavior had on partnerships between kindergarten through 12th grade and postsecondary education was the changing organizational climates and cultures.

Watkins and Roberts (2008) explored the challenges educators face as to what is acceptable evidence of teacher candidates achieving desired results and proficiency. Because of the limited number of university faculty available to assist with scoring teacher candidates' work samples, Watkins and Roberts used a triangulation approach to evaluate the teacher candidates by involving supervisors of student teachers, university faculty members, and the principal. They proposed that qualified, external evaluators such as supervisors of student teachers could be of considerable worth to the evaluation process. Watkins and Roberts advised that all evaluators should be screened and trained with a clear set of performance and scoring standards to assist with scoring teacher candidates' work samples. There were some concerns about external raters having a firm understanding of the work sample scoring model and how to rate it.

Teacher Attrition

The retention of teachers and teacher attrition has been a problem in every state and despite efforts to retain new teachers, 50% of them leave after the first 5 years of teaching (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2002). Attrition has been defined as the gradual reduction of the size of a workforce that occurs when personnel lost through retirement or resignation are not replaced (Encarta, 2008). Teacher attrition has been defined as teachers who leave the field of education, retire, or change schools (Dill & Stafford-Johnson, 2008). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005), comprehensive teacher induction programs have been carefully designed to reduce the number of beginning teachers leaving America's prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools. Comprehensive induction programs were designed to: (a) provide beginning teachers with administrative support, (b) guide working with teacher mentors to further develop skills to handle the entire range of classroom duties and student responsibilities, and (c) provide a continuum for evaluation and reflection of performances (Alliance for Excellent Education). The comprehensive induction programs have

saved schools' money by retaining hundreds of teachers. As reported in the Alliance for Excellent Education, comprehensive induction programs can provide early prevention and intervention support and tools to guard against teacher attrition.

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) estimated that a school district's cost for an exiting teacher was \$12,546. The Department of Labor estimated the leaving teachers' costs for an employer to be 30% of the exiting employee's salary. In 1999-2000, the average teacher's salary was \$41,820 x .30 = \$12,546 multiplied by the number of teachers estimated as leaving 173,439 X \$12, 546 = the total cost of attrition estimated at \$2.2 billion. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, it is apparent that comprehensive induction programs can reduce attrition and more than pay for themselves.

The RAND Corporation (2004) claimed to provide objective analysis and effective solutions to public and private educational sectors globally. In an executive summary prepared for the RAND Corporation and the Education Commission of the States, the focus was on empirical studies of preservice teachers' policies for retention and inservice practices that affected retention. According to the Rand Corporation, the research results offered some consistent findings regarding characteristics of new teachers entering the teaching profession:

1. females formed greater proportions of new teachers than did males;
2. Whites formed greater proportions of new teachers than did minorities;
3. college graduates with higher measured ability were less likely to enter teaching than were other college graduates;
4. elementary school teachers and teachers with more prior experience were more likely to return; and
5. a more tentative finding based on a small number of weaker studies was that an altruistic desire to serve society was one of the primary motivations for pursuing a teaching career. (n. p.)

In addition, the RAND Corporation (2004) noted that Guarino, Santibañez, Daley, and Brewer reported several findings regarding teacher attrition:

1. the highest attrition rates seen for teachers occurred in their 1st years of teaching and after many years of teaching when they were near retirement, thus producing a U-shaped pattern of attrition with respect to age or experience;
2. minority teachers tended to have lower attrition rates than did White teachers;
3. teachers with higher measured ability were more likely to leave teaching;
4. female teachers typically had higher attrition rates than did male teachers;
5. family related situations, such as marriage and children, were related to higher teacher attrition, particularly for women (note: data supporting these hypotheses were old);
6. schools with higher proportions of minority students, students in poverty, and low performing students tended to have high attrition rates of White teachers;
7. in most studies, urban school districts had higher attrition rates than did suburban and rural districts; and
8. teacher attrition was generally found to be higher in public schools than in private schools. (n. p.)

Lastly, the studies reviewed by the Rand Corporation (2004) revealed that nontraditional teacher preparation programs and alternative programs seemed to appeal to more diverse student populations and their graduates seemed to have higher entry rates into teaching and better retention rates than did graduates of traditional programs.

Mentoring

Clark (2001) said the best practices of mentoring placed importance on support, observation over time, and expert feedback. According to Clark, several key findings emerged from surveys and conversations with new teachers regarding effective mentorship and honing their knowledge while helping to shape their attitudes toward teaching. In addition, Clark determined that a regular support system improved intrinsic capacity because teachers were motivated by their students' achievement. In addition, positive interactions between the mentor and the new teacher grounded him or her in realistic classroom expectations--the new teacher

looked at the “big picture” and designed the lessons accordingly. Finally, mentoring others allowed for the mentor to increase his or her own leadership skills and job satisfaction (Clark).

Today there is greater concern for systematic approaches to make initial teacher training flexible and responsive to individual needs. The National Academy of Education (2005) has advanced the cause of highest quality education research for policy formation and educational practices. A landmark report by the National Academy of Education, *A Good Teacher in Every Classroom: Preparing the Highly Qualified Teachers Our Children Deserve*, called for reforms to raise education standards to ensure qualified teachers and offered recommendations to policy makers on how to improve teachers’ training. The National Academy of Education stated that although many agree quality teachers matter, there is disagreement about the affordability of training highly qualified teachers and assuring that all students will have them. A research committee from the National Academy of Education produced *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and be Able to Do* and offered a series of policy recommendations. These were:

1. provide subsidies for teacher recruitment;
2. develop high quality programs in high needs areas;
3. evaluate teachers based on actual performance-based testing programs to assess teachers’ knowledge and skills through actual demonstration of teaching practices;
4. strengthen accountability for teacher education;
5. improve teacher program funding comparable to other clinically-based professional programs;
6. monitor teacher education program outcomes;
7. close inadequate teacher education programs that do not meet rigorous accreditation criteria; and
8. provide support to beginning teachers through high quality induction programs that include trained mentors who are expert teachers with release time to coach and model good instructional practices. (pp. 2-3)

Comparative Education

According to Darling-Hammond (1998), many countries have changed their prospective teacher preparation programs. Germany, Belgium, Japan, and France now require new teachers to have 2 to 3 years of graduate level studies in addition to holding an undergraduate degree in subjects to be taught. France currently requires teacher candidates to complete a graduate university institute connected to nearby schools. In Japan and Taipei, new teachers have a reduced teaching load their 1st year of teaching in order to complete a year-long supervised internship with a mentor. China and Japan also have collaborative situations where new teachers observe veteran teachers and then engage in collaborative problem solving while discussing problems of practice and critiques of lesson plans with groups of colleagues. In contrast, Darling-Hammond reported that U.S. schools generally loaded new teacher interns with the greatest number of extra duties, they often received few teaching materials, and they generally had no long-term mentoring. Typically, new teachers have been expected to know everything they will need for a lifetime of teaching. According to Darling-Hammond, many new teachers said they had suffered common feelings of isolation and left the profession, whereas others reported they just coped with the situation they were handed.

In a comparison of teacher efficacy for preservice and inservice teachers in Scotland and America by Campbell (1996), the demographic variables of age, teaching experience, and degree status seemed to be related to the development of teacher efficacy in both countries. No significant differences were found between American and Scottish preservice and inservice teachers in regards to age, teaching experience, and degrees. Inservice teachers were documented to have higher levels of teacher efficacy and effectiveness and their confidence seemed to develop with experience in the classroom over time. Campbell referred to a definition of teacher efficacy as “the extent to which teachers believe that they can affect student learning” (p. 4). Although America and Scotland shared many characteristics of preservice and inservice teacher education, there were differences found. In America, requirements for teacher licensure and certification are decided by each state and there are no national requirements unless the

program administrators choose to apply for national or regional accreditations. Scotland's system of teacher preparation is national and centralized and the system includes primary through higher education. As pointed out by Campbell, the Scottish Office of Education guides curricula and teaching methods and along with the General Teaching Council directs teacher training and supply.

Diversity in 21st Century Classrooms

Researchers have provided evidence of major teacher educational issues for rural areas. Fry, Konopak, and McKay (2001) studied demographic data on kindergarten through 12th-grade education in the United States and reported that nearly 30% of the population in the United States accounted for the functionally illiterate. Fry et al. cited Herzog and Pittman's 1995 work characterizing rural areas as having higher unemployment, lower median incomes, and higher rates of poverty than did metropolitan areas. California had a 2.2 million rural population but this was only 8% of the state's population. In states that were heavily populated, rural people were the demographic minority (Fry et al.).

Historically, researchers and government officials have focused on issues surrounding urban and suburban school districts while neglecting rural settings. However, Fry et al. (2001) pointed out that Beeson and Strange identified realities that needed to be addressed in rural education. In 1997, cultural and ethnic groups accounted for 17% of all rural residents with a reported 33% under the age of 18. Rural Americans were found to be poorer than were those in metropolitan areas overall and were almost as poor as those living in urban areas. Poverty was pervasive among rural minorities especially among African Americans living in rural areas. As of spring 2001, the numbers revealed that there were 244 rural counties out of the 250 poorest counties in the United States. People still chose to live in rural areas if employment could be found. As reported in Fry et al., it was not that rural students and their communities lacked serious analysis of educational policy issues, rather, there was a prevailing matter of indifference. It was also a matter of a lack of constituency building. Many rural citizens were remotely

scattered among counties and jurisdictions. The data clearly pointed to the challenge for teacher preparation programs to improve learning for all students while sustaining the uniqueness of rural schools and to accommodate rural education concerns in broad-based reforms (Fry et al.).

Researchers have provided evidence of important characteristics of rural education to help meet these rural challenges. Fry et al. (2001) revealed a study by Hughes who focused on low and high achieving elementary schools in high poverty rural areas in West Virginia to determine why students with similar demographics and socioeconomic characteristics achieved low academic performance at one school and high academic performance at another. Fry et al. reported that Hughes' analysis disclosed many characteristics of high achieving, high poverty schools and low achieving, high poverty schools. Officials of higher education institutions reportedly have addressed some of the rural, high poverty schools' challenges and realities through newly developed relationships and constituencies with rural district partnerships known as PDS sites. Rural district schools that were committed to the PDS concept and principles have developed long-term, site-based needs programs with ongoing professional development opportunities for inservice and preservice teachers. Rural elementary schools and higher education advisory team members, faculties, preservice teachers, and other resource people often traveled many miles to remote rural areas to meet, plan, and orchestrate the PDSs in order to build effective, educational constituencies (Fry et al.).

According to the Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence (2004), the committee's goal is to build sustainable constituencies for educational excellence by educating the commonwealth of Kentucky's parents and its citizens including impoverished, rural county school systems. Since 1983, the Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence has been a nonpartisan, nonprofit, independent, citizens' advocacy group for Kentucky schools. The Pritchard Committee receives no government funding but is funded by foundations, corporations, and individuals in Kentucky. This unique, educational body works with parents and citizens and speaks out by informing the public, legislators, governors, and education officials of progress in

education. Sexton (2004), executive director of the Prichard Committee, reflected on the role of citizens in Kentucky's school reform experience by stating,

When people discuss public engagement, they really mean what schools should do to get parents involved in an inside-out kind of exchange. This is where school administrators reach out to parents and the community to inform and rally consensus around their agendas. (n. p.)

Sexton (2004) endorsed prior reasoning that public schools should reconnect to the public and bring the communities' agenda to the forefront of the school's agenda. He proposed that returning ownership to the public and its newfound reclaimed responsibility would benefit the community.

In recent grant collaborations between the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2006) and the Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence (2004), Sexton was quoted as saying:

Kentucky has a long history of illiteracy and poor academic achievement. Parents who can't read themselves can't read to their children; they don't have books or other written materials in the house, and their poor academic skills tend to pass to the next generation. (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, n. p.)

The intent of the Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence (2004) was to work collaboratively to solve educational problems with studies commissioned by nationally known experts, local officials, and concerned citizens through public statements, publications, and recommendations made by task forces. The Pritchard Committee is nationally known for its parenting workshops (Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence).

Collaborative Professional Development Schools

The focus of PDSs in the late 1980s and early part of the 1990s was on initial implementation of kindergarten through 12th-grade PDSs. The accountability evoked by external assessment forces such as the *No Child Left Behind Act* and NCATE have been pressuring universities to evaluate the impact on preservice teacher candidates and kindergarten through 12th-grade students. Teitel (2001) defined PDSs as innovative settings for preparing knowledgeable, skillful beginning practitioners and for providing different approaches to

university coursework that are more integrated with the real world of practice. PDSs can provide new patterns of observations and feedback for preservice teachers in their early field based and student teaching experiences. In addition, PDS experiences can bridge the gap between student teaching and teacher interns and other immersion programs (Teitel).

Previous educational research has resulted in strong patterns of emerging themes and issues concerning the restructuring of teacher preparation programs. One important reform theme has been the value of training teachers in collaborative prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools and university field-based partnerships such as in NCATE's PDSs (NCATE, 2008a). University and prekindergarten through 12th-grade school professionals have questioned the impact of PDSs and other field-based experiences on the preservice teachers' preparation and performances. Proponents of PDSs have claimed that requiring preservice teachers to practice teaching and learning theories over time with effective mentoring teachers is a key factor in producing high quality, content knowledgeable teachers (NCATE, 2008a).

PDSs are created through partnerships between postsecondary professional teacher preparation programs and prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools. The PDSs' partnership mission is to be fully engaged in the preparation of future teachers in real world settings, professional development, shared inquiry targeting the improvement of teacher practice, and enhanced achievement for all students. PDSs claim to improve the quality of student learning and teaching. The five PDS tenets are (a) the learning community; (b) accountability and quality assurance; (c) collaboration; (d) equity and diversity; and (e) structures, roles, and resources to support the work of the PDS (NCATE, 2008a).

Researchers (Allsopp, 2006; Levine, 1998; Perry, 2004) have suggested that preservice teaching experiences should include early and well structured, field-based teaching partnerships such as those found in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2002) PDSs. Higher education teacher preparation programs partner with PDS and nonPDS field-based schools throughout the professional core of required classes culminating with student teaching. University and school partners plan and implement field experiences so that preservice

teachers develop and demonstrate knowledge, performance skills, and dispositions in order for all stakeholders including the teachers, postsecondary students, and prekindergarten through 12th-grade students to learn (NCATE, 2002). However, there is a constant volley in teacher preparation programs concerning the varying levels and types of field-based participation needed by preservice teachers. The responsibility for training teachers involves school-based stakeholders more than ever in undergraduate teacher preparation. NCATE (2008a) has supported the potential power of PDSs and mentoring roles and responsibilities for improving the quality of teaching and improving students' education.

PDSs are partnerships wherein the university's teacher preparation programs and a prekindergarten through 12th-grade school can plan for and assess change according to the needs of preservice teachers and other stakeholders. For most preservice teachers, these partnerships can begin as early as observation during the 2nd semester of the sophomore year culminating with student teaching in the senior year. Professional training programs and field-based partnerships must adhere to rigorous NCATE performance-based standards for the preparation of future teachers. These standards require preservice teacher candidates to demonstrate the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach effectively children of all ethnicities, exceptionalities, and socioeconomic groups at the appropriate grade level.

In most universities, student teachers are exposed to field-based teaching experiences that might include experiences in PDSs during preclinical practice the semester before and during their senior year of student teaching. In other universities, preservice teachers practice their teaching and learning skills in prekindergarten through 12th-grade school settings from the time they enter the professional core of teacher preparation classes throughout the senior year (NCATE, 2007).

Teacher education programs are planned to produce high quality teachers through sustained teaching and learning performances with input from the education community especially prekindergarten through 12th-grade school collaborations. However, educational researchers have yet to determine if there are any significant differences in performance measures of preservice teachers with varying levels of field-based participation in PDSs.

Mentoring student teacher evaluations, performance-based portfolios, senior exit interviews, national teacher examinations, and other professional evaluations have been used to assess the quality of teacher graduates' preparation. Teaching in today's schools requires rigorous accountability for 1st-year teachers in content and pedagogical knowledge while demonstrating fairness by meeting the educational needs of all students in a caring, nondiscriminatory, and equitable manner (NCATE, 2007).

The 21st century's standard for increased accountability has expectations for preservice teachers to master a broad range of national teaching examinations such as the PRAXIS series II exams and professional evaluations throughout their program of studies. The PRAXIS series II exams claim alignment to professional expectations. Professional course content requires professionally aligned field-based experiences in order for preservice teachers to practice the goals and expectations required within the coursework and pedagogy. The final culmination of field-based experiences is an enhanced student teaching experience (NCATE, 2007).

Typically, a teacher preparation program uses program-specific local, state, and national evaluations to evaluate student teachers. The battery of tests required of all elementary education majors includes the PRAXIS Series II examination. The PRAXIS II is a subject assessment test measuring knowledge of kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice teachers in subject assessments, general and subject-specific teaching knowledge, and skills. The six instruments of student evaluations are the PRAXIS Series II Examination containing three subtests, two supervising teacher evaluation instruments, and the undergraduate student teacher exit interview rubric.

The teacher education program and its school-based collaborative partners are to design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that preservice teachers and other school stakeholders develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for student success (NCATE, 2002). Preservice teachers need formative and sustained exposure to field-based teaching in structured field-based settings designed with inquiry-based teaching and learning opportunities. PDSs are collaborative, field-based teaching experiences

that are typically part of an undergraduate preservice teacher's education program. These types of schools are not new; rather, they have evolved to correlate with new school reforms. PDSs were created to improve preservice students' teaching and learning through field experiences, to promote sustained, shared inquiry among colleagues, and to establish professional development among the partnering institutions and other collaborative initiatives within a school setting (Levine, 1998). NonPDSs offer field-based experiences without the NCATE's standards-based structure. Thus, kindergarten through 12th-grade schools can be nontraditional as well as traditional. Preservice teacher preparation programs often use nonPDSs for isolated teaching experiences prior to and during student teaching.

During the last 2 decades, education reform has once again focused on extensive, meaningful teacher collaboration (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). There has been a strong reform movement for universities and prekindergarten through 12th-grade schools to support more aggressive roles as joint partners in the preparation of preservice teacher education students. According to Inger (1991), "Many current major educational reforms call for meaningful, extensive collaboration among teachers--collaboration that goes well beyond their requesting and offering advice to one another" (n. p.).

The NCATE (1998) defined PDSs as:

. . . institutions created through partnerships among universities, schools, and other organizations including school districts and teacher organizations. They are intended to improve teacher preparation and professional development and to promote inquiry through collaboration of the partnering institutions in the context of a school. (p. 1)

PDSs have five critical standards. Each standard can be applied to the PDS's functions. Each PDS has varying developmental levels of these standards (Levine, 1998). Levine stated the following five threshold conditions of commitment from collaboration partners:

1. a positive working relationship and a basis for trust;
2. an agreement between school, school district, and the university to the mission of the professional development school;
3. a commitment to the professional development school standards;

4. the achievement of quality standards by partnering institutions as evidenced by regional, state, and national review; and
5. a commitment of resources from school and university. (p. 5)

In their publication, *Designing Standards that Work for Professional Development Schools*, the NCATE (1998) listed the quality standards necessary for providing the infrastructure for creating PDSs:

1. Learning community: The PDS is a learning community characterized by norms and practices that support children's and adults' learning. The learning-centered community consists of public teaching practice, integration of intern and preservice teacher, collegiality, inquiry, and dissemination of new knowledge.
2. Collaboration: A PDS is characterized by joint work between and among school and university faculty directed at implementing the mission. Responsibility for learning is shared and research is jointly defined and implemented.
3. Accountability and quality assurance: The PDS is accountable to the public and to the profession for upholding professional standards for teaching and learning and for preparing new teachers.
4. Organization, roles, and structures: The PDS uses processes and allocates resources and time to systematize the continuous improvement of learning to teach, teaching, learning, and organizational life.
5. Equity: A PDS is characterized by norms and practices that support equity and learning by all students and adults. (n. p.)

The factors influencing success or failure of collaborative endeavors frequently have been determined by whether they are voluntary or mandated collaborations. Indeed, the most important factor has been a willingness of the various stakeholders to collaborate. Today, many regulatory agencies and accrediting bodies are requiring collaborations such as PDSs between public schools and universities (Verbeke & Richards, 2001). With the evidence of written goals, collaborative partnerships should have a process in place to accomplish stated outcomes. An established system of benchmarked assessments of the process could help the partners to decide whether to adjust or not continue. According to Verbeke and Richards, it is possible to use performance assessment if precise and measurable goals and designated evidence of those goals have been predetermined.

Value of Professional Development Schools

The reformation of university-school collaborative environments might be impacting preservice teacher behaviors and student outcomes. There are many kinds of educational changes taking place in PDSs that appear to be both tangible and intangible. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) proposed professional development designs in which all teachers need to integrate theory with classroom practice. These researchers investigated ways in which to give novice and experienced teachers professional development time and opportunities for exploring the following concepts:

1. a student-centered view of teaching;
2. cross-role participation in teaching and decision-making (mentoring teachers, administrators, preservice teachers, parents, and other stakeholders);
3. preservice teachers working alongside mentoring teachers who are experts; and
4. teachers as learners with dual roles as mentors and professional colleagues.

An examination of the literature portrayed several themes regarding the role of PDSs including the improvement of the preparation of teachers and school wide involvement in professional growth. According to Abdal-Haqq (1992), Goodlad (1990), and Levine (1998), there is strong evidence that preservice teachers consider their field-based teaching to be the most valuable experience in their professional preparation. The growing body of research concerning university-school collaborations are vital to the changing needs of preparing tomorrow's teachers. Levine (Teitel & Levine, 2004), NCATE's senior consultant for PDSs, is an expert on university-school partnerships that strengthen the relationship between school reform and the clinical education of teachers. Levine (Teitel & Levine) led a team to develop PDS standards and field-tested them nationwide; however, she maintained that the standards were still not consistently used as a framework for research studies. In a review of then-current research, Teitel and Levine raised the following questions:

1. Which teacher outcomes are important to measure for students and how should they

- be measured?
2. Should teacher behaviors be studied as opposed to studies focused on teacher test scores or self-perception surveys?
 3. How should PDS standards and assessment processes be used for development and evaluation?

There are two major assumptions about PDSs according to Mecca (2008): all mentoring teachers or stakeholders in a PDS are equally motivated about their participation and preservice teachers might be the sole beneficiaries of their field-based work. Some mentoring teachers could vary from perceiving their work with preservice teachers as an excellent opportunity for growth while others might regard this role as assuming an unwanted responsibility. Mecca concluded there was broad research indicating student teachers reported their field-based experiences as being extremely beneficial to their teacher training. On the other hand, not all mentoring teachers agreed that the collaborative experience was as beneficial for both the mentor and mentee.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of my study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of student teachers with varying levels of participation in Professional Development Schools (PDSs). Twenty-first century teachers face mounting educational issues of high stakes accountability and teaching to diverse student bodies. In order to achieve the monumental task of preparing a new generation of teachers, researchers have suggested that preservice teachers' preparation experiences should include earlier, well-organized, and structured kindergarten through 12th-grade practical teaching experiences like those found in PDSs. PDS' collaborative settings between the university and the school are designed with predetermined expectations for providing preservice teachers training in the real world of practice.

Specifically, the university and the PDS design procedures that monitor the quality and differentiation of the teaching and learning experiences with reflection, feedback, and frequent communication with university and school administrators. In addition, PDSs expose preservice teachers to trained mentoring teachers who can assist them with classroom problem-solving, content delivery through technology and other mediums, and assessment and management of the learning environment. NonPDSs do not have similar PDS expectations or standards of accountability for preservice teachers or the teacher preparation programs. Typically, nonPDS sites expose the preservice teacher to fewer predetermined goals and organizational structure while in the field-based site.

Research Design

This was a quantitative study designed to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice student teachers with varying levels of participation in kindergarten through sixth-grade PDSs. The predictor

(grouping) variable was the number of semesters in a PDS classified into four levels: the first level of participation was 0 to 1 semester of PDS experience, the second level was 2 semesters of PDS experience, the third level was 3 semesters of PDS experience, and the fourth level of PDS experience was 4 semesters of PDS.

Prior to their senior year, preservice teachers were randomly assigned to PDSs or nonPDSs. However, for their senior year, students could request placement in specific schools (usually related to travel distance) and requests were granted if possible. All kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice teachers were required to participate in field-based experiences while implementing theories, knowledge, and skills in collaboration with their professional teacher education classes. The field-based experiences culminated during the senior year of enhanced student teaching.

The criterion variables in the study were scores for the three subtests of the PRAXIS Series II examination and scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument administered three different times during the student's preservice training. According to Creswell (2003), examining relationships between variables is central to answering questions and hypotheses leading to meaningful interpretation of data. In my study, the relationship between levels of participation in a PDS with each of six student performance measures was investigated.

Population

The target population for my study was student teachers from 2002-2006 at a small, private 4-year university located in Tennessee. Its department of education is dedicated to training quality practitioners who are prepared to teach in diverse teaching and learning environments. One hundred fifty-one student teachers were included in my study.

Instrumentation and Measurement

Predictor Variable

The predictor variable in my study was the level of field experience in a PDS of partnership classified into four categories based on the number of preservice semesters in a PDS of partnership. Of the 151 students included in my study, 35 student teachers had no field experience in a PDS of partnership, four student teachers had only 1 semester, 26 student teachers had 2 semesters, 47 student teachers had 3 semesters; and 39 student teachers had 4 semesters of field experience. Because there were only four student teachers with 1 semester of field experience in a PDS of partnership, these students were combined with students who had no field experience. Therefore, the four levels of field experience in a PDS of partnership were measured as: (a) 0 or 1 semester, (b) 2 semesters, (c) 3 semesters, and (d) 4 semesters of field experience in a PDS of partnership.

Criterion Variables

Six performance measures of preservice teachers served as the criterion variables in my study. The first, second, and third performance measures are included in The PRAXIS Series II examination that consists of three subtests: K-6 Principles of Learning and Teaching, the 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and the 1014 Content Knowledge. Each subtest exam has a potential range of scores from 100-200. The Principles of Learning and Teaching test measures general pedagogical knowledge using a case-study approach in kindergarten through sixth grades. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test measures content-specific curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The PRAXIS Series II exam assesses Content Knowledge that measures five content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, English, and social science (PRAXIS II, 2006).

The student teaching evaluation instrument (see Appendix B) was used to evaluate students from 2002 through the spring of 2006. This instrument was used to evaluate student teacher performance related to seven goals: planning, teaching strategies, assessment and

evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology. The teacher education committee at the participating university designed this formative instrument for use in student teaching field experiences. The evaluation score was created scoring each of the seven goals on the student teacher evaluation instrument: 0 = unsatisfactory; 1 = apprentice; 2 = proficient; and 3 = accomplished. The student's score was the sum of scores for the seven goals divided by seven. Each evaluation had a potential range of 0-3.

The student teaching evaluation instrument was used three different times during students' preservice training to measure three criterion variables in my study. The supervising teacher conducted one evaluation after the student completed the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience. There was a second evaluation by the supervising teacher at the end of the student's fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience. Finally, the student teacher evaluation instrument was used to evaluate students as part of their exit interviews at the end of student teaching. The student teacher's exit interview team was comprised of university faculty, kindergarten through eighth-grade PDSs and nonPDS mentoring teachers and PDS university-lead faculty, kindergarten through eighth-grade administrators, and supervisors of student teaching.

Data Collection

After receiving study approval, permission to gather the data for the PRAXIS II Series examinations and the student teacher evaluation instruments was requested in a letter to the participating university's School of Education Dean and Assistant Dean and the research committee (see Appendix A). These quantitative data were collected for use in the study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question #1

Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the three PRAXIS Series II examinations (Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011; Elementary

School Content Knowledge 1014; and the Principles of Learning and Teaching) among students in the four levels of field experiences in PDSs?

Three analyses of variance models were used to answer this research question. The predictor variable in each model was the level of field experience in PDSs. The three ANOVA models tested three null hypotheses, one for each of the PRAXIS II test scores:

Ho₁₁ There are no differences in the Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment PRAXIS II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

Ho₁₂: There are no differences in the Elementary School Content Knowledge PRAXIS II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

Ho₁₃: There are no differences in the Principles of Learning and Teaching PRAXIS II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

Research Question #2

Are there differences in the student teacher's scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience, at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience, and exit interview scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs?

This research question was analyzed with three analysis of variance models. The predictor variable in each ANOVA model was involvement in a PDS of partnership measured as level of field experience in PDSs.

The analysis of this research question tested the following null hypotheses:

Ho₂₁: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

Ho₂: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

Ho₃: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores for the exit interview at the end of student teaching among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented the purpose and the research design of my study. Also included were the descriptions of the population, the four levels of participation in PDSs, and the instruments used to measure six student teacher performance variables. The research described in this chapter was guided by two research questions and six null hypotheses. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the findings for two research questions and six null hypotheses. The purpose of my study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of student teachers with varying levels of participation in Professional Development Schools (PDSs). Six performance measures of preservice teachers served as the criterion variables in my study. The first, second, and third performance measures are included in the PRAXIS Series II examination that consists of three subtests: K-6 Principles of Learning and Teaching, the 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and the 1014 Content Knowledge. Each subtest exam has a potential range of scores from 100-200. The Principles of Learning and Teaching test measures general pedagogical knowledge using a case-study approach in kindergarten through sixth grades. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test measures content-specific curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The PRAXIS Series II exam assesses the Content Knowledge that measures five content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, English, and social science (PRAXIS II, 2006).

The remaining three performance measures in my study were student teachers' performance evaluations by supervising teachers and the exit interview committee at the university. The student teaching evaluation instrument was used to evaluate students from 2002 through the spring of 2006. This instrument was used to evaluate student teacher performance related to seven goals: planning, teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology. Students' performance related to each goal was scored: 0 = unsatisfactory, 1 = apprentice, 2 = proficient, and 3 = accomplished. The student teacher's score on an evaluation was the sum of scores for the seven goals divided by seven. Therefore, the potential range of a given evaluation was 0 to 3.0. The student teacher evaluation instrument was used to evaluate students three times during

the course of their studies: at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade teaching setting, at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade teaching setting, and at the student's exit interview from the university.

Analysis of Research Questions

Following is an analysis of each research question.

Research Question #1

Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the three PRAXIS Series II examinations (Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011; Elementary School Content Knowledge 1014; and the Principles of Learning and Teaching) among students in the four levels of field experiences in PDSs?

In order to evaluate the potential impact of experiences in PDS, my study used only students' test scores who took the PRAXIS II exam during the 4th semester. Three analysis of variance models were used to answer this research question. Because preservice teachers may take the PRAXIS II subtests at different times during their professional program, to make valid comparisons, the analyses were limited to only those students who took the exam in the 4th semester of their program. This research question evaluated three null hypotheses.

Ho:1₁ There are no differences in the Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA) PRAXIS II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

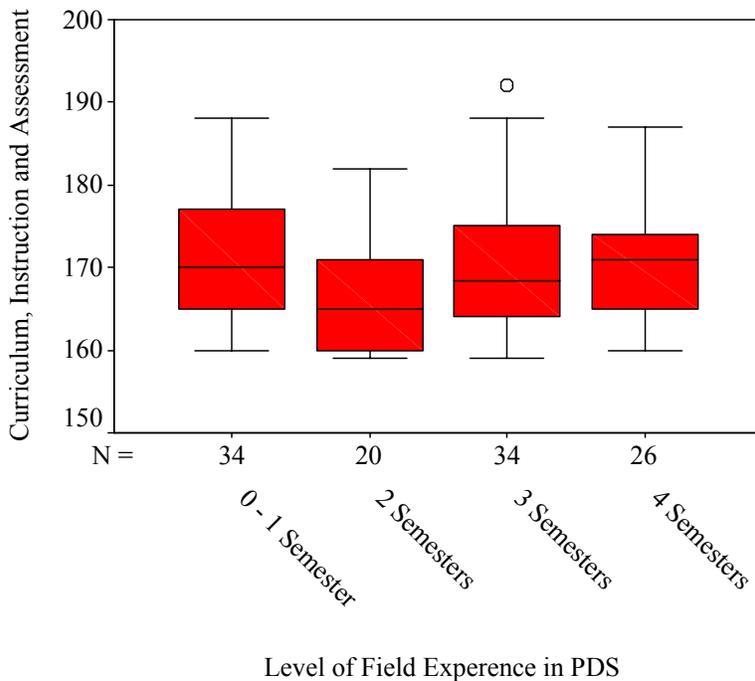
A one-way analysis of variance was used to evaluate the mean differences in kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' PRAXIS II 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test scores at the end of four levels of field experience. The dependent variable was the PRAXIS II 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test scores. The independent variable was the level of field experience in PDSs; this had four levels: (a) 0 or 1 semester of field experience in PDS, (b) 2 semesters of field experience in PDS, (c) 3 semesters in PDS, and (c) 4 semesters of

field experience in PDS. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(3,110) = 1.60, p = .19$; therefore, I failed to reject the null hypothesis. The effect size as measured by η^2 was small (.04). That is, only 4% of the variance in preservice teachers' PRAXIS II, 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test scores was accounted for by level of field experience in PDSs. As shown in Table 1, there was little difference in the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011 means of the four levels of field experience in PDSs of partnership. Figure 1 shows the box plot for the kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, 1011 scores by field experience in PDSs.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Student Teacher Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment PRAXIS Scores by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools of Partnership

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	34	170.97	7.76	168.26	173.68
2 Semesters	20	166.75	6.94	163.50	170.00
3 Semesters	34	170.82	8.45	167.88	173.77
4 Semesters	<u>26</u>	170.92	7.15	168.03	173.81
Total	114				



o = an observation between 1.5 times to 3.0 times the interquartile range

Figure 1. Boxplot for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment PRAXIS Scores by Level of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

Ho₁₂: There are no differences in the Elementary School Content Knowledge PRAXIS

II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

A one-way ANOVA was used to compare the mean differences in kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' PRAXIS II Content Knowledge-014 test scores at the end of four levels of field experience. The criterion variable was the PRAXIS II Content Knowledge-014 test scores. There were four levels of field experience in PDSs: (a) 0 or 1 semester of field experience in PDS, (b) 2 semesters of field experience in PDS, (c) 3 semesters in PDS, and (d) 4 semesters of field experience. The analysis of variance was not significant, $F(3,42) = 2.53, p = .07$. I failed to reject the null hypothesis. However, the effect size as measured by η^2 was large (.15) with 15% of the variance in preservice teachers' Content Knowledge test scores accounted for by level of field experience in PDSs. In light of the large effect size, failure to reject the null

hypothesis was related to the small size of the sample ($N = 46$) for this analysis. Table 2 shows that students with 4 semesters of field experience in PDS had a higher Content Knowledge mean than did students with fewer semesters of experience in PDS. The mean for students with 4 semesters of PDS experience was slightly over 14 points higher than for students with only 2 semesters of field experience in PDS. Figure 2 shows the boxplot for the kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' Content Knowledge scores by level of field experience in PDSs.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Content Knowledge PRAXIS Scores by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools of Partnership

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	10	153.70	12.46	144.78	162.62
2 Semesters	8	142.75	9.10	135.14	150.36
3 Semesters	13	151.08	10.11	144.97	157.19
4 Semesters	<u>15</u>	156.80	13.93	149.08	164.52
Total	46				

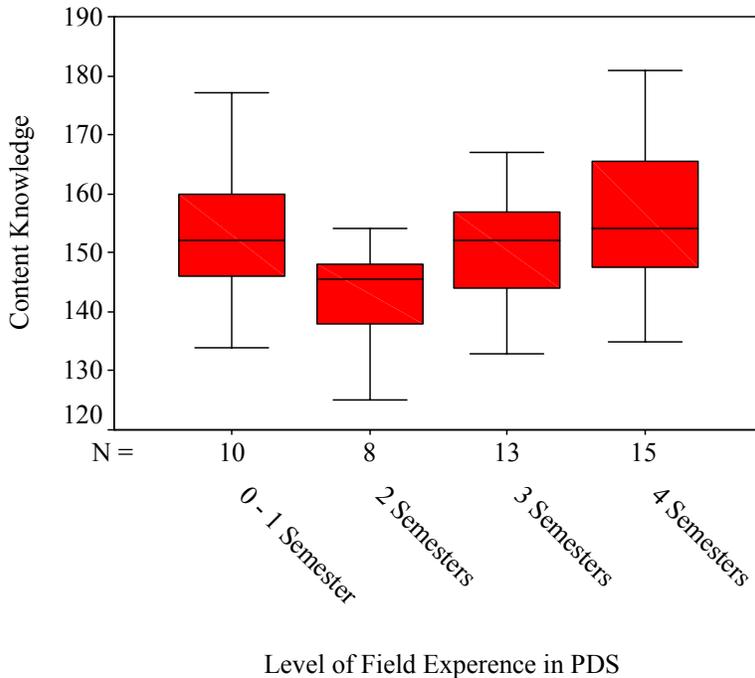


Figure 2. Boxplot for Content Knowledge PRAXIS Scores by Level of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

Ho₁₃: There are no differences in the Principles of Learning and Teaching PRAXIS II test scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs.

Kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' Principles of Learning and Teaching test scores were compared at the end of four levels of field experience in PDSs: (a) 0 or 1 semester of field experience in PDS, (b) 2 semesters of field experience in PDS, (c) 3 semesters in PDS, and (d) 4 semesters of field experience in PDS. The criterion variable was the Principle of Learning and Teaching test scores. The analysis of variance was not significant, $F(3,112) = 2.61, p = .06$. I failed to reject the null hypothesis. The effect size as measured by η^2 was medium (.07) with 7% of the variance in preservice teachers' Principles of Learning and Teaching test scores accounted for by level of field experience in PDSs. As shown in Table 3, there was little difference in the Principle of Learning and Teaching PRAXIS II test score means of the four levels of field experience in PDSs. Figure 3 shows the boxplot for the kindergarten through

sixth-grade student teachers' Principle of Learning and Teaching test scores by the semesters in PDSs.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Principles of Learning and Teaching PRAXIS Scores by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools of Partnership

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	34	168.18	8.03	165.37	170.98
2 Semesters	21	165.57	6.38	162.67	168.48
3 Semesters	35	171.31	9.25	168.14	174.49
4 Semesters	<u>26</u>	170.31	7.17	167.41	173.20
Total	116				

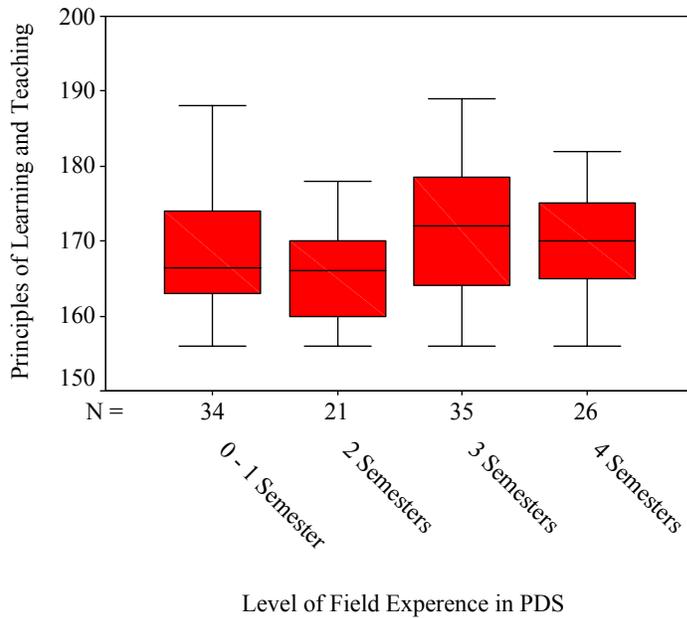


Figure 3. Boxplot for Principles of Learning and Teaching PRAXIS Scores by Level of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

Research Question #2

Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience, at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience, and exit interview scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs?

Ho₂₁: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

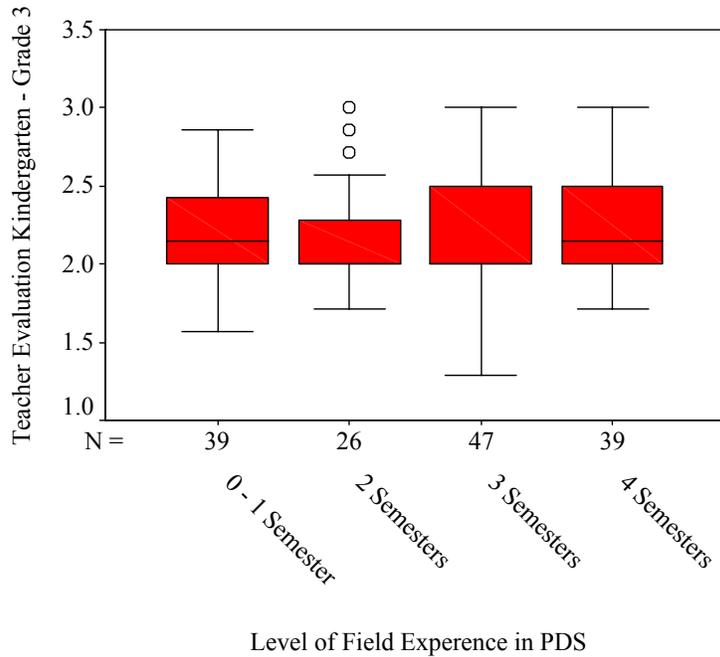
The same student teacher evaluation instrument was administered three different times to measure three criterion variables. The evaluation score was created scoring each of the seven goals on the student teacher evaluation instrument: 0 = unsatisfactory, 1 = apprentice, 2 = proficient, and 3 = accomplished. The student's score was the sum of scores for the seven goals divided by seven. Each evaluation had a potential range of 0-3.

There was no difference in student teachers' evaluation scores for the kindergarten through third-grade teaching setting among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs, $F(3, 147) = .40, p = .76$; therefore, I failed to reject the null hypothesis. The effect size as measured by η^2 was small (.01). Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for student teacher evaluation scores for kindergarten through third-grade teaching setting by levels of field experience. Figure 4 shows the boxplot for student evaluation scores for the kindergarten through third-grade teaching setting by level of field experience in PDSs.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Student Teacher Evaluation Scores for Kindergarten Through Third-Grade Teaching Setting by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools of Partnership

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	39	2.19	.32	2.08	2.29
2 Semesters	26	2.14	.34	2.00	2.28
3 Semesters	47	2.20	.41	2.08	2.32
4 Semesters	<u>39</u>	2.24	.37	2.12	2.36
Total	151				



o = an observation between 1.5 times to 3.0 times the interquartile range

Figure 4. Boxplot for Student Evaluation Scores for the Kindergarten through Third-Grade Teaching Setting by Level of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

Ho₂: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores at the end of the fourth grade through sixth grade student teaching experience among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

There were no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores for the fourth- through sixth-grade teaching setting among the varying levels of field experience in PDSs, $F(3, 147) = .05, p = .98$; therefore, I failed to reject the null hypothesis. The effect size as measured by η^2 was small ($< .01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in student teachers' evaluation scores for the fourth- through sixth-grade teaching setting was accounted for by level of field experience in PDSs. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for student teacher evaluation scores for fourth- through sixth-grade teaching setting by levels of field experience in PDSs. Figure 5

shows the boxplot for student evaluation scores for the fourth- through sixth-grade teaching setting by level of field experience in PDSs.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Student Teacher Evaluation Scores for the Fourth-Through Sixth-Grade Teaching Setting by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	39	2.28	.41	2.14	2.41
2 Semesters	26	2.31	.27	2.20	2.42
3 Semesters	47	2.29	.33	2.19	2.38
4 Semesters	<u>39</u>	2.30	.37	2.18	2.42
Total	151				

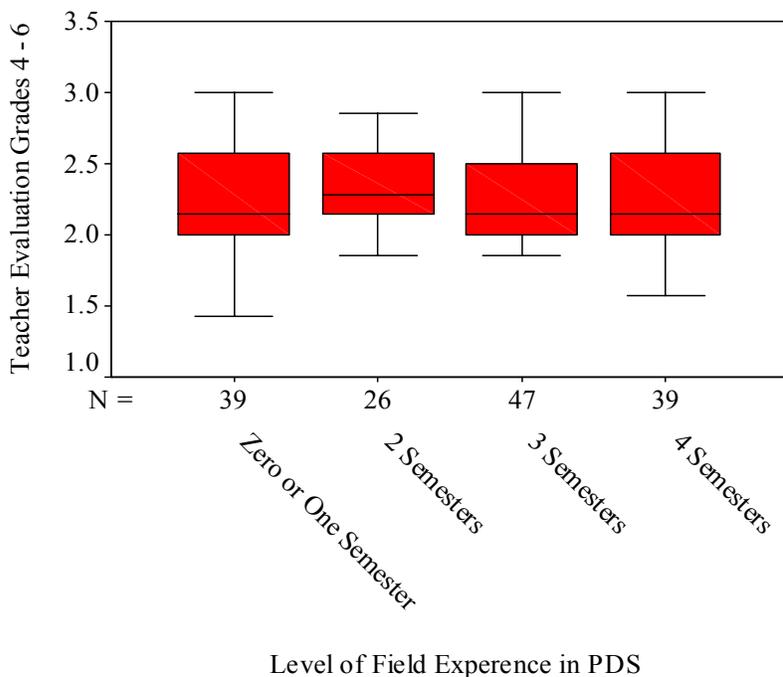


Figure 5. Boxplot for Student Teacher Evaluation Scores for the Fourth-through Sixth-Grade Teaching Setting by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

Ho₃: There are no differences in the student teacher evaluation scores for the exit interview at the end of student teaching among students with varying levels of field experience in PDSs.

In this analysis, the exit interview score was created as follows: Students who graduated in fall, 2005 and spring 2006 had two questions on the exit interview that were in two parts (Goal 3 parts a and b and Goal 6 parts a and b). In the analysis in this document, I took the average of parts a and b for goals 3 and 6 and used the averages in the calculation of the exit interview score.

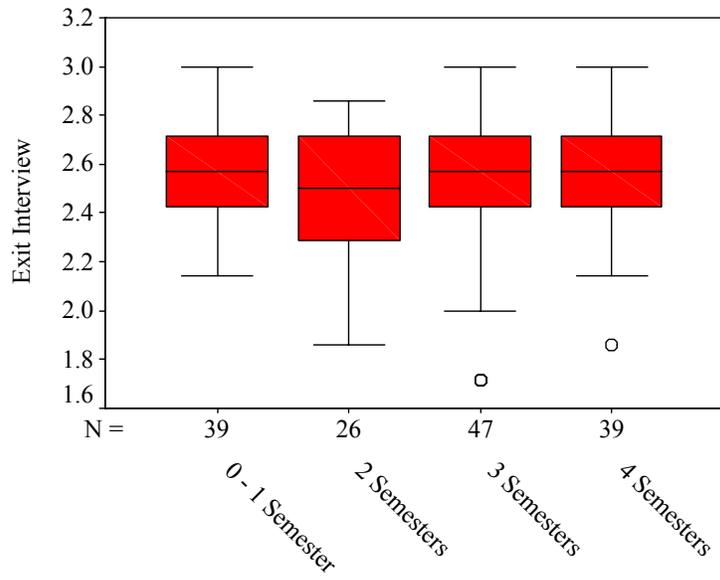
There was no difference in the levels of field experience and students' exit interview scores, $F(3, 147) = 1.11, p = .35$; therefore, I failed to reject the null hypothesis. The effect size was small (.02). Only 2% of the variance in exit interview scores was accounted for by level of field experience in PDS. Table 6 shows the means and standard deviations for student teacher

exit interview scores by levels of field experience in PDSs. Figure 6 shows the boxplot for student teacher exit interview by level of field experience in PDSs.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Student Teacher Exit Interview Scores by Levels of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Level of Field Experience in PDS:					
0 or 1 Semester	39	2.57	.19	2.51	2.63
2 Semesters	26	2.48	.27	2.37	2.59
3 Semesters	47	2.56	.28	2.48	2.64
4 Semesters	<u>39</u>	2.59	.25	2.51	2.67
Total	151				



Level of Field Experience in PDS

o = an observation between 1.5 times to 3.0 times the interquartile range

Figure 6. Boxplot for Exit Interview Scores by Level of Field Experience in Professional Development Schools

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of student teachers with varying levels of participation in Professional Development Schools (PDSs). The study focused on student teachers with four levels of field experiences at a small, private university along with their performance measures on the PRAXIS II series examinations, mentoring kindergarten through sixth-grade student teacher evaluation instruments, and the senior exit interview. An analysis of variance procedure was used to test if the means were significantly different from each other among students in four levels of field experience in PDSs.

Student teachers' PRAXIS II test scores from 2002 through the spring of 2006 were used as documented in the department of education's testing and certification office at the participating university. The performance measures used were the PRAXIS II examination series test scores for 011-Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; 014-Content Knowledge; and PLT-Principles of Learning and Teaching. The final student teacher performance measures used were the kindergarten through third-grade and fourth- through sixth-grade student teacher evaluation instruments and the senior exit interview.

The focus of the student teacher evaluation instrument was to evaluate the student teacher's performance on seven goals: planning, teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology. The student teacher evaluation instrument was also used to evaluate student teachers during their exit interviews as the final student teaching performance measure at the end of student teaching. The exit interview teams were comprised of PDS and nonPDS mentoring teachers, kindergarten -through eighth-grade principals, and LMU student teacher supervisors

and faculty. Using analysis of variance procedures, the relationship between levels of participation in a PDS with each of seven student performance measures was investigated.

Summary of Findings

This was a quantitative study based on an analysis of two research questions and six null hypotheses designed to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of kindergarten through sixth-grade preservice student teachers with varying levels of participation in kindergarten through sixth-grade PDSs. The predictor variable was the number of semesters in a PDS classified into four levels: (a) 0 or 1 semester, (b) 2 semesters, (c) 3 semesters, and (d) 4 semesters of field experience in a PDS of partnership. The criterion variables in the study were scores for the three subtests of the PRAXIS Series II Examination and scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument administered three different times during the student's preservice training. The kindergarten through third-grade supervising teacher conducted one evaluation for student teachers. A second evaluation was completed by the supervising teacher at the end of the student's fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience. Finally, the student teacher evaluation instrument was used to evaluate student teachers as part of their senior exit interviews. The population involved 151 student teachers from 2002 through the spring of 2006. The results are summarized for each research question and the null hypotheses.

Research Question #1

Are there differences in the student teachers' scores on the three PRAXIS Series II examinations (Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011; Elementary School Content Knowledge 1014; and the Principles of Learning and Teaching) among students in the four levels of field experiences in PDSs?

In order to evaluate the potential impact of experiences in PDSs, my study used only those students' test scores who took the PRAXIS II examination during the 4th semester. Three one-way analysis of variance procedures were used to answer this research question.

There was no significant difference in the performance measures on the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 1011 test scores at the end of the four levels of field experience. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test measures content-specific curriculum, instruction, and assessment. A one-way analysis of variance was used to evaluate the mean differences in kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' PRAXIS II 1011 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test scores. The analyzed data revealed 34 students scored a mean ($M = 170.97$) with 0 to 1 semester of field experience in PDSs compared to 20 students with 2 semesters who scored a lower mean ($M=166.75$). In addition, 34 students scored a mean of ($M = 170.82$) with 3 semesters and 26 students with 4 semesters of field experience scored a mean of ($M = 170.92$). The overall means ranged from ($M = 166.75$ to $M = 170.97$). There was no significant difference found in the Elementary School Content Knowledge-1014, PRAXIS II test scores among the 46 students in four levels of field experience in PDSs as shown in Table 2. The PRAXIS II Content Knowledge exam has a potential range of scores from 100-200. Content Knowledge measures five content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, English, and social science (PRAXIS II, 2006). Students are advised to take the Content Knowledge examination soon after completing their general education classes. This program recommendation often results in a reduction of the number of students taking the Content Knowledge examination with 4 semesters of PDS experience. The findings revealed that of the students participating in the four levels of field experience, 15 students with 4 semesters of PDS experience scored the highest mean ($M = 156.80$) with a standard deviation of 13.93. However, the mean ($M = 156.80$) score of 4 semesters was a difference of only 3.10 points from students scoring a mean ($M = 153.70$) with 0 or 1 semester of PDS experience as shown in the data.

There was also no significant difference ($p = .06$) found on the Principles of Learning and Teaching performance scores among the four levels of field experience in PDSs. The PRAXIS examination subtest: Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) measures general pedagogical knowledge using a kindergarten through sixth-grade case-study approach. The mean differences among 116 students with 0 to 4 semesters of field experience ranged from the lowest mean ($M =$

165.57) for 2 semesters to the highest mean ($M = 171.31$) at 3 semesters of field experience. The data revealed the PLT overall mean ($M = 169.13$) for 116 students and a standard deviation of 8.15.

Research Question #2

Are there differences in the student teacher's scores on the student teacher evaluation instrument at the end of the kindergarten through third-grade student teaching experience, at the end of the fourth- through sixth-grade student teaching experience, and exit interview scores among students in the four levels of field experience in PDSs?

An ANOVA models was used to evaluate each of the three null hypotheses, one for each of the student teacher evaluation instrument scores. The predictor variable in each ANOVA model is involvement in a PDS measured as level of field experience in PDSs. The same student teacher evaluation instrument was administered three different times to measure three criterion variables for student teachers from 2002 through the spring of 2006. The evaluation score was created scoring each of the seven goals on the student teacher evaluation instrument: 0 = unsatisfactory; 1 = apprentice; 2 = proficient; and 3 = accomplished. The student's score was the sum of scores for the seven goals divided by seven. Each evaluation had a potential range of 0-3. This instrument was used three different times: (a) student teachers were evaluated by their kindergarten through third-grade mentoring teachers, (b) student teachers were evaluated by the fourth- through sixth-grade mentoring teachers, and (c) student teachers were evaluated by a senior exit interview committee using the same instrument. The student teacher performance variables related to seven goals: planning, teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology.

As shown in the data, no significance differences were found on the kindergarten through third-grade student teacher evaluation scores. The student teacher evaluation instrument was administered to measure the student teachers on seven teacher education goals. The kindergarten through third-grade mentoring teachers evaluated the student teachers using seven performance-

related goals. The evaluation instrument had a potential range of 0-3 with 0 = unsatisfactory, 1 = apprentice, 2 = proficient, and 3 = accomplished. The 39 student teachers with 4 semesters of field experience in a PDS had a higher mean ($M = 2.24$) than did 39 student teachers with 0 to 1 semester in a PDS with a lower mean ($M = 2.19$). However, 39 student teachers with 0 to 1 semester of PDS field experience had a higher mean ($M = 2.19$) than did 26 students with 2 semesters of PDS experience ($M = 2.14$). The mean differences among the four levels of field experience were small.

The findings show no significant differences were found among the 151 student teachers on their fourth- through sixth-grade student teacher evaluation instrument, as shown in the analyzed data, of means and standard deviations. The fourth- through sixth-grade mentoring teachers evaluated student teachers using the same student teacher evaluation instrument as the kindergarten through third-grade mentoring teachers. The evaluation instrument had a potential range of 0-3. There was virtually no difference between the 39 student teachers with 0 to 1 semester of field experience ($M = 2.28$) and student teachers with a 4 semester mean ($M = 2.30$).

As evidenced by the findings, no significance differences were found in the levels of field experience and students' exit interview scores. The student teacher evaluation instrument was used as part of the senior exit interview. The student teacher evaluation instrument used for the exit interview score had two questions on the exit interview that were in two parts (Goal 3 parts a and b and Goal 6 parts a and b). The average of parts a and b for goals 3 and 6 were used in the calculation of the exit interview score. The evaluation was administered at the end of the student teaching experience. In this analysis, a professional committee consisting of university and kindergarten through 12th-grade educators evaluated the student teachers. There was very little difference between the 39 student teachers' exit interview scores with 0 to 1 semester of field experience who scored a lower mean ($M = 2.57$) and the 39 student teachers with 4 semesters of PDS field experience with a mean of ($M = 2.59$). The student teachers with 2 semesters of field experiences scored the lowest mean ($M = 2.48$).

The purpose of my study was to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers with varying levels of participation in PDSs. The literature concerning evaluation measures of PDSs' impact on various stakeholders, such as student teachers without direct alignment to the PDS standards provides support for my study's findings of no significant difference among student teachers with varying levels of PDS experience. In essence, the suspected effectiveness of PDSs are elusive and might be ascertained only when the evaluation instruments are authentically aligned to PDSs' goals and initiatives of the university-school collaboration and its stakeholders.

Conclusions

My study focused on determining if there were any differences in performance measures of kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers from 2002-2006 with varying levels of participation in PDSs. My study provided quantitative data suggesting that PDSs might not affect specific academic performance measures of kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers. Research-based literature strongly supported the Pk-16 university-school field-based collaborations to provide mentoring for all student teachers (Allsopp, 2006; Clark, 2001; Podsen, & Denmark, 2000). Based on the analysis of data, the PDSs appear to have no clear significant relationship on the student teachers' PRAXIS II examination subtests scores or their student teacher evaluation instrument scores. The student teacher evaluation instrument was used to evaluate kindergarten through third and fourth- through sixth-grade student teachers by their PDS mentoring teachers. All kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers were evaluated on seven goals by a senior exit interview team before graduating from the licensure teacher preparation program.

There appears to be no relationship between kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' participation in PDS experiences and higher test scores on the PRAXIS II Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment examination; Content Knowledge; or the Principles of Teaching and Learning. Teitel (2004) proposed simply that PDS outcomes must be directly linked to what

might contribute to student improvement for PDSs and universities. This was supported by Teitel in a review of research on how PDSs can make a difference if there is a connection between the structural and PDS developmental processes to the desired outcomes. Inger (1991) advocated a more stringent set of aligned standards for veteran and preservice teachers to boost teacher quality. The *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002) reform initiatives recommended to boost teacher quality by promoting innovative teacher education reforms and teacher mentoring programs. However, the findings of my study indicated that PDSs do not impact certain preservice teachers' performance outcomes such as standardized testing that are conducted in a vacuum. There must be a clear focus on PDS outcomes between the university and PDSs. Teitel noted three predominant evaluation recommendations for PDSs and student learning: (a) use the PDS standards, (b) use conceptual frameworks designed for student learning, and (c) focus on how PDSs transform schools and universities into creative incubators for transformation. Teitel's PDS evaluation recommendations included five standards for improving the quality of student learning and teaching: (a) learning community; (b) accountability and quality assurance; (c) collaboration; (d) equity and diversity; and (e) structures, roles, and resources to support the work of the PDS (NCATE, 2008a). Today, there still seems to be slow but important growth towards connecting teacher education program goals to PDSs' assessment of university preservice students. The quality and quantity of the research available to assert effectiveness in the preparation of future teachers has grown considerably but still lacks measurable impacts for PDS assessment. The challenge to educators, according to Watkins and Roberts (2008), is to think critically about acceptable achievement of desired results that are both valid and equitable.

My study also found no statistical significance on the student teacher evaluation instrument used to evaluate student teachers by kindergarten through sixth-grade supervising teachers. This same instrument was scored three times during the senior year of student teaching: once by the kindergarten through-third-grade teacher at the end of the teaching setting, at the end of the teaching setting in fourth- through-sixth grade setting, and finally at the end of student teaching as the student's exit interview from the university. The student teacher evaluation

assessed PDSs' student teachers' performances related to seven program goals: (a) planning, (b) teaching strategies, (c) assessment and evaluation, (d) quality learning environments, (e) professional growth, (f) communication and learning, and (g) technology.

Supervising teachers at the participating university's PDSs complete the same student teacher evaluations as do the nonPDSs' supervising teachers. The specificity of the seven student teacher evaluation goals are not linked to PDS performance. There are PDS collaborative goals related to the needs of the PDS and its students, but the goals are not specifically aligned with identified processes to a shared conceptual framework. According to Verbeke and Richards (2001), there should be clear evidence of written goals with aligned processes in place to accomplish stated outcomes. PDSs should have collaborative systems of benchmark assessments that are shared and measurable. It appears that external supervising teachers should be trained in the practical assessment of preservice teachers and how the PDS goals are assessed according to each level of PDS experience. My study did not test the effectiveness of student teachers in the PDS classroom and kindergarten through sixth-grade student learning. However, the level of student teachers' PDS experience does not appear to make a difference in the student teacher evaluations or the senior exit interviews. The results of the performance evaluations could suggest the individual student teacher's prior knowledge and experiences or the quality of the teacher program may be a determining factor of success. NCATE requires teacher education programs to use practical assessment with designated benchmarks of success and that they are systematically evaluated (Watkins & Roberts, 2008). Before student teaching, all student teachers have successfully passed rigorous program benchmarks and performance evaluations except for the student teacher evaluations and senior exit interviews. Even though teachers representing the PDS schools participate in scoring the senior exit interviews, the scoring results might be contingent upon the individual teacher's knowledge of PDSs expectations and experience level. PDS supervising teachers should be trained with PDSs' predetermined goals, processes, and outcomes for students. The notion that all teachers are equally excited and committed to ongoing professional development in PDS might be an assumption. Some teachers,

even if they are voluntary participants in PDSs, might regard their role as simply getting help in the classroom, fulfilling a professional obligation, or taking on an unwanted responsibility (Mecca, 2008). As for university faculty collaboration involvement, collegial and collaborative practice might be challenged within the university culture. Even though PDSs are part of reformed preparation practices for teacher education programs, universities have not typically valued or rewarded field service as equal to other types of scholarly involvement (Kennedy, 1990). It is often difficult to implement true professional collaborations outside of the university because of lack of administrative support.

The following six conclusions were drawn from the results of my study:

1. Based on the findings of my study, there is no significant difference between kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' participation in PDS experiences and higher tests scores on the PRAXIS II Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment examination. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test measures content-specific curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
2. Based on findings from my study, there is no significant difference between kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' participation in PDS experiences and higher test scores on the PRAXIS II Content Knowledge examination. The PRAXIS Series II exam assesses the Content Knowledge that measures five content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, English, and social science (PRAXIS II, 2006).
3. There was no significant difference between kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' four levels of participation in PDSs and the PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching test scores. The Principles of Learning and Teaching test measures general pedagogical knowledge using a case-study approach in kindergarten through sixth grades.
4. There was no significant difference in the kindergarten through third-grade student teachers' student teacher evaluation instrument scores and the four levels of participation in PDSs. The student teacher evaluation instrument measured seven goals: planning,

teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology.

5. There was no significant difference in the fourth- through sixth-grade student teachers' student teacher evaluation instrument scores and the four levels of participation in PDSs. The student teacher evaluation instrument measured the same seven goals as kindergarten through third grade: planning, teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation, quality learning environments, professional growth, communication and learning, and technology.
6. Based on the findings of my study, there is no significant difference in kindergarten through sixth-grade student teachers' senior exit interview.

Discussion

My study was conducted to determine if there are any differences in performance measures by the 2002-2006 student teachers on the PRAXIS II series examinations, kindergarten through sixth-grade student teacher evaluation instruments, and the senior exit interview among student teachers with varying levels of participation in PDSs (PDSs). The results indicate that student teachers' PDS experiences do not significantly impact the PRAXIS II exams scores, the student teacher evaluations, or the senior exit interviews. One possible explanation of the lack of any impact on student teacher performance might be that the university does not use the PDS standards to evaluate the student teachers' performances. The implications of the results are consistent with the literature indicating the work by Teitel and Levine (2004) maintaining that PDS standards are not consistently used to assess the impact on any stakeholders. Teitel and Levine proposed that investigations should be made regarding which teacher outcomes are important to measure for students and how should they be measured, should teacher dispositions be studied as opposed to teachers' test scores, and how should PDSs' standards be used for development and evaluation.

The research data do not indicate any significant differences of PDS impact on student teachers' tests and evaluation scores. Therefore, further research is needed regarding clear PDS written goals and processes needed to sufficiently evaluate the student teachers' knowledge, skills, and disposition performance measures.

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendation is for university preservice teacher education programs and kindergarten through sixth-grade PDS practice:

All preservice teacher performance assessments should be aligned with PDSs' standards with explicit evaluations for each PDS level of experience.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. My study should be replicated using a larger population.
2. A longitudinal study should be conducted with PDSs and student teachers.
3. Qualitative research should be conducted to evaluate PDSs and the impact on preservice teachers.
4. Further research should be conducted regarding PDS design variables.
5. Additional investigations should be conducted regarding NonPDS postsecondary field experiences and their impact on student teachers' performance measures.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter to Lincoln Memorial University

Dr. Sherilyn Emberton, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Fred Bedelle, Dean, School of Education
Dr. Teresa Bicknell, Dean, Assistant Dean School of Education
Lincoln Memorial University
Harrogate, TN 37752

Dear Drs. Sherilyn Emberton, Fred Bedelle, Teresa Bicknell:

I am a doctoral student at East Tennessee State University. I am requesting your permission to conduct this study to determine if there are any differences in performance measures of preservice teacher educators among student teachers with varying levels of participation in professional development schools. The population in this study is the Lincoln Memorial University, 2002-2006, K-6 preservice teachers during their senior year of student teaching. Several sources of data will be used to evaluate the student teachers' academic performances.

Data sources from 151 student teachers' evaluations will come from the PRAXIS II examinations, the Supervising Teacher student teachers' evaluations and the Senior Exit Interview evaluations. The above evaluation scores are used to determine the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions performance measures of every student teacher before graduating from the licensure teacher preparation program. The data information is gathered and documented by the director of the Teacher Certification and Licensure office. The data for this study will be provided by the Teacher Certification and Licensure office with all student names de-identified. All of the preservice teacher data is coded to protect the identity of individual students.

I will provide Lincoln Memorial University with a copy of the finished dissertation. This should be helpful in providing information that could benefit the School of Education and the Professional Development Schools.

Please feel free to contact my doctoral advisor or me if you have any further questions about my study.

Sincerely,
Connie D. Wright
Doctoral Student
East Tennessee State University

APPENDIX B

Student Teaching Evaluation Instrument

LMU DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CLINICAL PRACTICE: ENHANCED STUDENT TEACHING
NCATE STANDARD 3

TN EVALUATION and PROFESSIONAL GROWTH MODEL

CLINICAL PRACTICE: STUDENT TEACHING

EVALUATION SUMMATIVE INSTRUMENT

Student Teacher _____ LMU Supervisor _____
 School _____ Mentoring Teacher _____
 Placement: I _____ or II _____ Date _____ Observation Number _____ Final Exit Record _____

GOAL	Unsatisfactory	Level 1 Apprentice A (75%)	Level 2 Proficient B (85%)	Level 3 Accomplished C (95%)
Goal I: Planning	_____	_____	_____	_____
Taken from Planning session				
Taken from Planning session				
Taken from Planning session				
Goal II: Teaching Strategies	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observed in classroom				
Observed in classroom				
Observed in classroom				
Goal III: Assessment and Evaluation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Taken from lesson plan				
Mentoring teacher comments				
Taken from written reflection				
Taken from written reflection				
Goal IV: Quality Learning Environments	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observed in classroom				
Observed in classroom				
Goal V: Professional Growth	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mentoring teacher comments				
Future Growth Plan Report				
Mentoring teacher comments				
Documented in Notebook				

Goal VI: Communications and Learning	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observed in classroom				
Observed and documented				
Observed in classroom				
Goal VII: Technology	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observed and documented				
Observed in classroom				

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