

Where Do We Go from Here?

**Issues in the Sustainability of Professional
Development School Partnerships**

EDITED BY

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Eight

Investigating Distributed Leadership in Professional Development Schools: Implications for Principals, Schools, and School Districts

Connie L. Fulmer & Carole G. Basile

Distributed Leadership

In teacher education, professional development schools (PDSs) are experiencing growth in popularity. These interactive organizational environments are learning communities with a focus on the continued professional development of classroom teachers, the design and redesign of relevant and authentic learning experiences and curriculum, the use of findings from research and inquiry, and the provision of a context for the preparation of new teachers, all with a concentration on student learning (Clark, 1999; Goodlad, 1990; Teitel, 1998). A PDS involves university faculty, teacher candidates, and others who along with the school staff support structures and processes of distributed leadership and change in the culture of a school.

Distributed leadership has enjoyed recent popularity and is the latest *type* of leadership in a long list (transformational, transactional, moral, visionary, creative, authentic, servant, instructional, and learner-centered leadership) to receive attention in the literature. A student of leadership can trace the roots of distributed leadership to the initial references of the power of informal groups revealed in the Hawthorne Electric Studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1938) where employees with different roles ignored official job specifications, traded jobs, and developed informal social structures with norms, values, and sentiments that affected performance.

From this initial reference one can follow citations in social psychology literature (Gibb, 1954, 1958, 1968), to works in the area of organizational interdependence, and to subsequent discussions of its potential (Bryman, 1996; Firestone & Louis, 1998; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995), and then to the more recent and thorough treatment of distributed leadership and potential contributions to scholarship and practice (Elmore, 2000; Gronn, 2002; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). According to Gronn (2002) "distributed leadership... appears to be an idea whose time has well and truly come" (p. 654).

In schools today, while educators often talk about a *leader* as an instructional leader, curriculum leader, cultural leader, teacher leader, or student leader, it is becoming evident that leadership is not the function of one individual, but rather it is distributed across the school with a variety of players giving and taking across the organization. While recent state and national standards frame leadership expectations in terms of what an individual in the role of leader is expected to know and be able to accomplish, the popular work of DuFour and Eaker (1998) has produced thousands of professional learning communities in U.S. schools. Similarly, others (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Silns & Mulford, 2002) argue the type of leadership that is *distributed* throughout the school rather than concentrated in the hands of a few individuals can improve student achievement. Rogoff (1990) argues the physical, social, and cultural contexts of the school or a particular facet of the school can and should create different leadership structures in support of distributed leadership. Elmore (2000) reports distributed leadership has played a crucial role in generating school reform and instructional improvement. In sum, a distributed-leadership perspective yields a distributed practice grounded in practice rather than in a position or role (Spillane et al., 2001) with the potential to impact student achievement.

Traditionally, the content of leadership preparation programs supported the conception of leadership as "leader-centric," focused on the "deeds of causally potent individuals, and down played or ignored collective and shared forms of leadership" (Gronn, 2002, p. 690). The emergence of distributed leadership has been mapped in the literature and has been used in the development of professional leadership standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2000; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2002). From a distributed perspective, Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) suggest leadership should be an interactive relationship between leaders and followers and not a process controlled by a leader or dictated by formal structure.

The tension between a practice of leadership that is focused or concentrated in one individual or distributed across people, situations, or places exists in the literature and in the day-to-day work life of schools. This is especially true in professional development schools. The addition of resources from universities in the form of ideas, practices, and energy should be integrated into existing leadership patterns, styles, processes, and programming. Potential, positive, value-added benefits can only be realized if leadership is reframed and productively distributed within PDS partnerships.

It seemed plausible that professional development schools would structurally promote the presence of distributed leadership and would also depend upon a distributed-leadership practice to achieve stated goals. In other words, if the added resources (leaders, ideas, and energy) in a professional development school partnership are shared along with the work that results in student learning, then, regardless of reliance on individualized position descriptions for roles—we will see new forms of leadership or division of labor strategies in which a range of patterned and semi-formal workplace inter-dependencies operate between a greater variety of people (Gronn, 2000).

Therefore, the types of leadership practices used in PDS environments were investigated. Thus by accessing several PDS environments and their leadership teams, it was hoped to gain insight into instances of the emergence of distributed leadership, evidence of focused leadership, or some mixture of the two. This work began with a review of literature, and from that effort researchers constructed and used the distributed leadership framework to investigate leadership practices in several PDSs in the metropolitan Denver area.

A Distributed Leadership Analytic Framework

In looking at models of distributed leadership (Engeström, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; Gronn, 2000, 2002; Spillane et al., 2001) similar elements were found describing activities associated with the construct of distributed leadership. Activity theory is recommended by Gronn (2002) as having particular advantages for the study of leadership because it: (a) provides a holistic view of organizational work in which the division of labor figures prominently; (b) provides a thorough analysis of the practice and internal relations; and (c) takes a developmental and emergent approach to practice to facilitate understanding of the role of workplace learning. As this model is applied to professional development schools, it helps to look at (a) the organization of a school, (b) the human resources available from the

university, and (c) the complex inter-relationships that form as a result of having leadership distributed throughout the school.

Engeström's (1999c) activity theory has six elements:

1. a subject (S), an individual or collective who is the agent of action.
2. an object (O) intended to realize a subject's purpose or intention.
3. an instrument (I) or tool that embodies prior learning and facilitates the attainment of objects.
4. a community of practice (C), the source of membership identity and interests.
5. rules (R) that define acceptable cultural practice.
6. a division of labor (DoL), encompassing role specialization and modes of coordination (Gronn, 2002, p. 674).

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) use different words to explain distributed leadership: (a) actors, (b) actions, (c) artifacts and tools, (d) interactions, and (e) tasks (macro and micro). These are similar to those described by Engeström and are integrated into the D-LP framework shown in Figure 1.

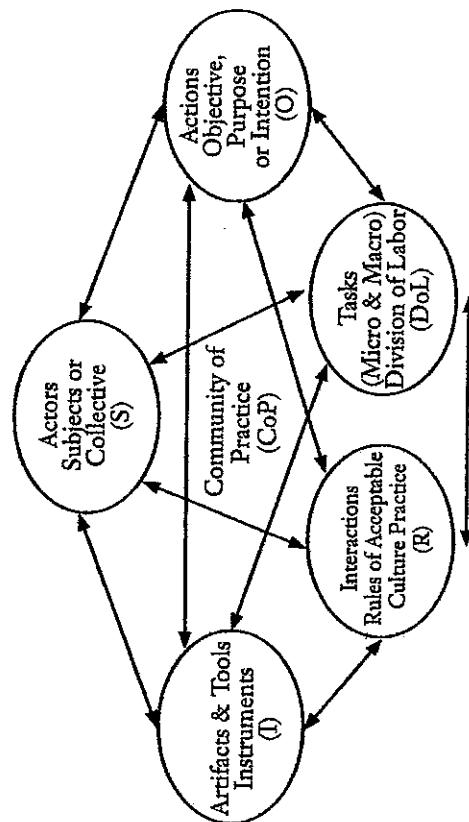


Figure 1. A distributive-leadership practice (D-LP) framework: Elements of a distributed-leadership practice that result in a community of practice.

As the work unfolded in these professional development schools, the D-LP framework was used to analyze the leadership activities that were taking place within and across the Denver professional development schools.

Professional Development Schools

Professional development schools are quite varied, and thus before any discussion of what distributed leadership is like in a PDS, the milieu of the PDS model being used in the metro Denver area must be described (See Figure 2). Primarily, these PDSs are special schools with unique school-university partnerships capable of changing school cultures and adding value to students and the community (Teitel, 2003). Typically they serve four functions: (a) teacher preparation, (b) renewal of curriculum and instruction, (c) professional development, and (d) inquiry. As illustrated in Figure 2, simultaneous renewal is a key component of the partnership so there is renewal of the university and the K-12 school.

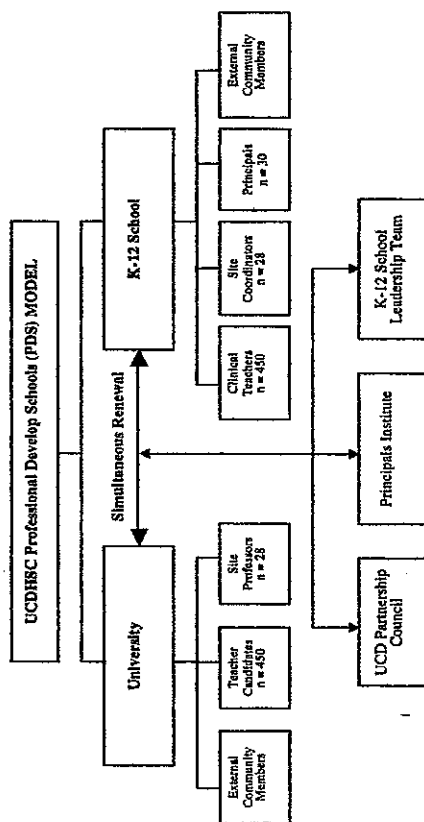


Figure 2. University and K-12 partner schools by subject types, collectives, and leadership structure for the partnership.

The *Teacher Leaders for Tomorrow's Schools* program at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center (UCDHSC) has a current enrollment of 450 undergraduate and graduate teacher candidates. Program faculty and students work in 30 different professional development schools located in six school districts in the metropolitan Denver area. Most of these professional development schools serve students in

Title I schools. Teacher candidates spend approximately 100 days of the school year in a single PDS with the support of a university site professor (a faculty member who works at the school one day per week for the length of the school year) and the school's site coordinator (a master teacher on special assignment and released from normal teaching duties).

The site professor and instructional coach (a building resource coach) work together as a team to prepare 12–15 teacher candidates each year to provide professional development opportunities for classroom teachers, to engage in the reform of curriculum and instruction, and to conduct research/inquiry, all with a focus on the improvement of student learning. Teacher candidates and clinical teachers co-teach in classrooms and together positively impact student learning by lowering class size, differentiating instruction, and using best practices. Key to this partnership is the principal in each school who leads a team dedicated to school/district-university collaboration promoting a culture ongoing, site-based, job-embedded teacher learning at all levels of the professional continuum.

In addition, the external community is involved in a variety of ways depending upon specific partner school needs. The school community may include parents, business leaders, other educators (i.e., special educators, counselors, art, music, and physical education teachers) and other partner organizations. The university community often includes members from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, affiliate organizations, and other School of Education department faculty.

Structures are in place in both organizations, such as the teacher education council, made up of all site coordinators and site professors. This group meets monthly to discuss program policy, participate in joint professional development activities, or make admissions decisions. A partner principal institute, held quarterly, engages principals in conversation about what it is to be a principal of a partner school and the role of "knowledge manager" given additional partnership resources. School leadership teams often include site professors and/or teacher candidates. The teams meet weekly or monthly to discuss accountability and planning. Here, then, faculty from the university and K–12 schools become boundary spanners crossing into each other's domains.

A Distributed-Leadership Practice Contextualized

As the D-LP framework is applied to the overview of professional development schools, specific examples are highlighted about subjects, objects, instruments, rules, division of labor, and a community of practice. Each element of the framework is outlined, below.

Subjects within the University of Colorado at Denver PDS Model

The *subjects* (S) or individuals or collectives who are the agents of action in these professional development schools are principals, site coordinators, building coaches or resource teachers, site professors, clinical teachers, special education teachers, and teacher candidates.

In general, the *principal* provides strong leadership for assuring systems and supports are in place to sustain the PDS. The principal assures that quality services to students are enhanced while taking an interest in the development of new teachers by assuring a breadth of professional experiences are available in the school.

The *site coordinator* is the person in the school whose action ensures school and university personnel work together for the benefit of all learners (public school students, teacher candidates, school and university faculty, school and university administrators, parents and other community members). The site coordinator works with the principal to ensure the youngest learners, public school students, remain at the forefront of decision-making. The site coordinator works closely with a professor to ensure the learning and well being of teacher candidates for their internships. The site coordinator also works with clinical teachers and site professors so that summative notations on the performance based assessment are noted for every teacher candidate in the school.

A *site professor's* work with a partner school is negotiated with specific schools but typically includes participation during the opening week of school internships and each Thursday during the school year. Each site professor's overall responsibility is to support and provide leadership in partner school efforts in the four PDS functions (quality teacher preparation, professional development, renewal of curriculum and instruction, and addressing difficult problems of practice through inquiry and research). They have the specific responsibility to ensure the learning and well being of teacher candidates partner-school-based internships. In order to accomplish these responsibilities, site professors often serve on individual partner school leadership teams. Site professors and site coordinators are members of the UCDHSC's Teacher Education Council that meets monthly at the university to discuss policy, engage in professional learning, and share ideas across PDSs.

Clinical teachers are selected on the basis of criteria that include the quality of their teaching, their potential or performance in working with teacher candidates, and their commitment to participation in partner school functions and governance. The partner school leadership team may develop additional criteria and specific processes for the selection of clinical teachers. Although the term clinical teacher is a label aligned with

teacher preparation, the first responsibility of teachers is to the learning and well-being of children and youth.

Teacher candidates complete four school internships leading to licensure. Teacher candidates may complete one, two, three, or all four internships in the same school. They carry out their responsibilities with the guidance and assistance of clinical teachers, site professors, and the school's site coordinator.

Other school personnel, while not serving as clinical teachers or mentors for teacher candidates, may be involved to some degree in partner school functions. In addition, *external community members* are seen as subjects in this model as they may have a critical role to play in the partnership. All of the subjects listed above fall under the general term of *Actors* in the D-LP framework.

Objects within the UCDHSC Professional Development School Model

The *objects* (objectives, purposes, or intentions) in this context are the goals of the partnership: (a) improving reading scores, (b) implementing professional development for more effective math instruction, (c) conducting inquiry related to co-teaching, or (d) carrying out some other goal typically related to the four partner functions. These objectives, purposes, or intentions guide behavior of subjects and fall under the general term of *Actions* in the D-LP framework.

Instruments within the UCDHSC Professional Development School Model

The *instruments* of the partnerships include items such as (a) meeting agendas, schedules, and protocols; (b) composition of teams; (c) negotiated agreements between the university and the school, handbooks or other materials created for use in the partnership; (d) the written, taught, and tested curriculum; (e) instructional strategies; (f) assessment practices of K-12 students and teacher candidates; and (g) systems or supports for embedding and sustaining the partnership. The instruments described here fall under the general term of *Artifacts or Tools* in the D-LP framework.

Rules within the UCDHSC Professional Development School Model

The *rules* (acceptable cultural practice) are created as the partners come together. All of these elements create a community of practice as the university and school become strategically entangled and are individually and collectively renewed simultaneously over time. The rules described here regulate the *interactions* (the general term in the D-LP framework) of the actors and their use of artifacts or tools as they take actions in pursuit

of the objectives, purposes or intentions of the professional development school.

Division of Labor within the UCDHSC Professional Development School Model
The *division of labor* encompasses roles and responsibilities of the subjects as they emerge and develop into a fully functioning PDS. The division of labor strategy is used by actors to deal with the complexities associated with achievement of the goals at a macro and micro level. Different artifacts and tools are required for different tasks in the larger scope of work of the partnership. Division of labor strategies are mediated by the rules of acceptable practice or the interactions of the partnership and fall under the general term of *Tasks* in the D-LP framework.

Community of Practice within the UCDHSC Professional Development School Model
All of these components, subjects, objects, instruments, rules, and division of labor interact in these professional development schools to promote, support, and facilitate the development of a *community of practice*. Or, using the words of Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001), actors use artifacts and tools and interact by using rules based on a culture of practice and take action toward goals using a division of labor strategy focused on both macro and micro tasks. In either model, the result is the emergence of a community of practice. In analyzing the examples of distributed leadership provided below, we used Engeström's (1999a, 1999b, 1999c) terms (subject, objects, instruments, rules, division of labor, and community of practice) and their associated codes.

Investigating Distributed Leadership in Professional Development Schools

Six leadership teams were convened to conduct structured self-assessments in relationship to the Professional Development School Standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2001). Particular schools were selected for a number of reasons, including length of time in the partnership, type of school, and school district. Participating schools included one high school, two middle schools, and three elementary schools. The high school and one of the middle schools had been in the partnership for 10 years. The other middle school was in its first year. Of the three elementary schools, one was new, one had been in the partnership for three years, and the third had been in the partnership for 10 years.

The average number of participants in each of the six leadership teams was 12 composed of classroom teachers (30.4%), site coordinators (14.3%), administrators (10.7%), parents (9.8%), site professors (9.8%), and other staff members or paraprofessionals (3.6%). The leadership teams were predominantly female (67.9%) and Caucasian (82.1%). In a full-day meeting, the teams discussed each of the PDS standards from the perspective of their experience in a partner school.

Site coordinators at each of the six schools worked with a researcher to convene leadership teams including site coordinators, site professors, clinical teachers, teachers, parents, and the principals in a daylong meeting. The purpose of the meetings was to gather data around the research question: To what extent do these stakeholders perceive the impact of the partnership on student learning?

To begin the day, the researcher offered a brief overview of the study. The participants read and signed consent forms after being advised of their meaning. Then the researcher asked each participant to share expectations they had for the day. After sharing their expectations, participants took a survey about school climate.

Next, participants launched into the longest activity of the meeting. The participants were led in a brainstorming activity about the various innovations occurring at their schools, followed by a 2-3 hour discussion about the NCATE PDS Standards. In this process, the participants read one of the NCATE Standards to themselves. Drawing on the innovations that had been brainstormed and their experiences at the school, they would write down evidences of the standard they had encountered. The group was asked to draw on and discuss examples from their practice in determining if the school was "beginning," "developing," "at-standard," or "leading." A discussion guide, developed by UCDHSC based on the NCATE standards was used to support the participants in discussing the standard. After completing the standards discussion, participants took another version of the school climate study, an inquiry about the influence being a PDS has on school climate.

Upon analysis of the transcripts of the leadership team conversations, there were examples of how leadership activities were distributed across the PDSs. Ten exemplars were selected representing distributed leadership in different ways and from different perspectives. Implications of this work include recommendations for improving the density of distributed leadership in these PDSs and the training of pre-service and in-service principals for fostering a distributed-leadership practice.

Examples of Distributed Leadership in PDSs

The examples presented in this chapter are not representative of all the leadership activities taking place in a particular school or across all PDSs. Taken together, they create a picture of the types of leadership that can be described as instances of distributed leadership in a PDS. The first eight examples describe leadership activities team members felt were important to their successes as professional development schools. For each example, elements of distributed leadership are identified using the D-LP framework (see Figure 1) and how these elements contribute to the emergence of a community of practice in a PDS. The ninth example describes a variety of activities that have taken place in one high school since 1998 and suggests a possible relationship between the maturity and productivity of a PDS and the density of distributed-leadership activities prevalent in this particular school. In the tenth, distributed-leadership activities are described in a school engaged in taking the PDS model to the next level—beyond the four functions of (a) teacher preparation, (b) renewal of curriculum and instruction, (c) professional development, and (d) inquiry—to that of linking the four functions with the induction and retention of teachers.

Example # 1: Teacher Candidates, Co-teaching, and Classroom Leadership

At one of the elementary schools, a principal (S) stated, "When the clinical teacher (S) is not in the room, there is still quality instruction (O) going on. And teacher candidates (S) often invite me (S) in to do an observation (I). I have seen the most dynamite lessons (O) when teacher candidates (S) feel like they are in charge (R) or can be the leader (S) in the classroom. The kids (S) are really benefiting from having quality day (O) instead of a just get by day when their teacher (S) is gone."

"In this particular school it has been common practice (R) that teacher candidates (S) and clinical teachers (S) use a co-teaching model (I) as often as possible with each taking on a different level of planning (DoL) and instruction (I) depending on the experience levels (R) of teacher candidates (S). However, co-teaching (I) in the school has also taken on a broader meaning (CoP) for all teachers in the school. In a systematic way (R), teacher candidates (S) are often provided the opportunity (CoP) to have the classroom (I) on their own while their clinical teacher (S) or another teacher (S) co-teaches (I) with another teacher (S) in the building."

The subjects in this example are principals, teacher candidates, clinical teachers, and other teachers. The objects identified in this example include quality instruction, dynamic classroom instruction, and a quality day. An unspoken but implicit object of this school is to further professional learn-

ing. The policies and practices, systems, or *rules* (being in charge or responsible for the classroom) in this school are replete with *instruments*: observations, co-teaching, instruction, and the phrase, "a systematic way." The *division of labor* in this example (each taking a different level of planning) makes it possible, if one follows the *rules* (depending upon the experience of the teacher) for all to work more closely with others in the building and build shared experiences or a *community of practice* instead of working alone in an isolated classroom setting.

Example # 2: Teachers, Teacher Candidates and Common Assessments

A clinical teacher (S) in a middle school explained, "I'm the science department head (S) and we have 4 teachers (S) that are former teacher candidates (S) and two of those have been teaching for 6 years in our building and have had teacher candidates (S) of their own for a few years now. When I think about how close our department (CoP) is and how on the same page we are (CoP), it is just amazing. Right now we (S) are working on common assessments (I) within the department. Teacher candidates (S) have been a part of the process (R) and have brought assessments (I) that they (S) have created as part of their performance-based assessments (O) required by the university (R). We (S) have used some of these as our common assessments (I). These assessments (I) have been reliable (R) for our clinical staff (S) as well as a number of other teachers (S) in the building and have helped everyone (S) understand a variety of ways (I) to collect their own data (O)."

In this distributed leadership example, the *subjects* include clinical teachers, teacher candidates, and other teachers. The *object* or intent is to create common assessments or performance-based assessments in the science department to collect relevant data. The *instruments* are the processes and variety of ways to create common assessments as required of all teacher candidates in the program by the university, *rules*.

These common assessments are available to all teachers as a direct result of the partnership, thereby defining the *rules* of acceptable and reliable cultural practice. The work itself and the discussion among the participants promote a *community of practice* (all departments in this school are doing the same thing—creating common assessments) that includes the thoughts and interests of the collective. As teacher candidates continue to be hired by the school, they are in a much better position to contribute immediately to professional practice and student learning.

Example # 3: Legacy Projects and Leadership within the Community

In each professional development school, teacher candidates (S) are required to complete a "legacy" or service learning project (O) for the school.

Usually these projects involve teacher candidates (S) in leadership roles (S) related to the broader community (CoP). One elementary school leadership team (S) described the legacy project (O) as a key component (I) in improving school-community relations (O).

In this particular Title I partner school, teacher candidates (S) created books (O) for and with children (S) who did not have access to books (I) at home. Using a software template (I), students (S) were guided through a writer's workshop-like approach (I) to the writing process to create text (O, I) for their books (O). Students (S) then took digital pictures (O, I) in a variety of places in the school and community environment (CoP) and embedded (I) them within the text. In this way these books (I) connected students (S) with their environment. These books (O) were produced in mass quantities (I) at the school at a very low cost. Various levels of books (I) were presented to parents (S) to take home to begin developing their own home libraries (O, I).

In this distributed-leadership example, the *subjects* are represented by teacher candidates, teachers, and students who take leadership roles in this boundary spanning activity with the parents of the children in the school. The books serve as *objects* and *instruments* depending upon the specific instance and time frame. Before their creation, books are *objects* or goals. After creation, they become *instruments* used by parents to build home libraries and to engage families in the practice of reading to their children and providing literature at home. Again, the teacher candidate takes on new roles in the *division of labor* that is far different from the traditional role in an isolated classroom, thereby expanding the *community of practice* outside the boundaries of the school.

Example # 4: Site Professor Leadership

This example illustrates the role of the site supervisor in a variety of leadership activities in a partner school. As part of the leadership team, the site professor stated, "Three different principals (S) have had three different styles (I) and that often sets the tone for my relationship (I) with the principal (S) and my role (S) in the school. At this particular school, the principal (S) is a lot more like, 'what do you think, what would you do?' Very collaborative (I) and allows me to share in the leadership of the school" (CoP).

The *subjects* in this brief example are the site professor and her experiences with a number of principals (S). The unstated *object* is meaningful participation leading to an enhanced *community of practice*. When the principal is able to share leadership with a site professor (in this case, a former principal herself), leadership is distributed among people. A principal, who feels isolated and states that it is often lonely at the top, can benefit from

the experience and leadership of the site professor in a PDS. The advice from the site supervisor offered to the principal contributes to effective leadership or management of the school, the intended objective. Having a sounding board from a participant outside the partner school also contributes to this principal's sense of a supportive *community of practice*, important for the work required to change school culture.

Example # 5: Site Coordinator Leadership

This next example comes from a site coordinator. "I (S) have become much more of a partner (CoP) with the administration (S) rather than a competitor. I've (S) been asked to take on several school improvement duties (R) from co-writing the accountability report (O) to being placed in charge (R) of some of the school improvement strategies (I). I think that has caused me to have to work differently (R) in the building than before, especially with my peers (R). She (S) [the principal] defers to me (S) often and often seeks my consult (CoP)."

This *subject* of this example, like that of other the site professors, takes on new roles (R) previously defined within the culture of practice as the work of some other person (S). Site coordinators are not yet school administrators, but they are no longer classroom teachers. This assignment illustrates changes in the culture of practice within the partnership. It also changes the traditional roles or *division of labor* among the teachers, principal, and the site coordinator. These changes contribute to the development of the *community of practice* because they have found time to assist the principal with goals or *objects*, the school improvement plan, and accountability reports. There are more chances for discussion among instructional staff, contributing further to the enhancement of the *community of practice*. This intermediary position (not administration, not teacher) of a distributed-leadership practice can move the effectiveness of the PDS forward.

Example # 6: Preparing Leaders for Tomorrow

This next example comes from the career paths of a variety of participants (S) in professional development schools. "And we see former teacher candidates (S) that are tremendous leaders. I mean one of the things we're (CoP) doing right now is trying to find out what data (O) we want to collect from former teacher candidates (S). It's amazing the leadership positions (O) they have taken. In one case there is a literacy coach (S) that was a former teacher candidate (S). In another case, TK was a former teacher candidate (S), clinical teacher (S), site coordinator (S), and just finished her administrator certification program (O). It's also interesting to see where

other partnership participants (S) are as well. LH was a site coordinator (S) and now is a principal (O)."

Sometimes formal leadership or increased leadership capacity does not come about immediately, but emerges over time. In this example, the *subjects* were anyone affiliated with the partnership that eventually moved on to other positions of leadership which, in this example, is viewed as an objective. The *instruments* (not mentioned in this example) would have been as diverse as partner participants who were given many opportunities within the partnership for leadership activity. Within a PDS, *outcomes* of distributed leadership are seen as an increase in opportunities for leadership across a variety of places (over time and space) changing the school district cultural community and reinforcing and enhancing the *community of practice*.

Example # 7: Leadership Through Professional Development

According to one participant, "I really think the study group (S, I) that we're conducting at our school has made a huge impact. We (S) decided to really make a change (R) in how we approached working with the partnership, instead of focusing our attention, like we were on teacher candidates (S). We decided instead to place our major focus on the clinical teachers (S) and grow really strong clinical teachers (S) who will then have an impact (R) on teacher candidates (S)."

The participant went on to say, "In other words, we're trying to build a cadre of leaders (O) in the building that can take over some of the professional development responsibilities (I). So I've (S) been mentoring a teacher (S) on running (R) a literacy cohort (I) in the building that has kind of become a CU-Denver class and a service opportunity in the building for us. We've recently started a writing cohort (I) that's modeled after the Denver Writing Project. We're starting an adolescent literature study (I) group (S), and just various efforts like this have taken off in a grassroots manner to get teachers (S) talking about their practice (CoP) and exploring what they're doing collectively (CoP) as a group."

In this example, the *subjects* focused on other *subjects*, clinical teachers first and teacher candidates second, using *instruments* of professional development (study group, literacy cohorts, and writing cohort). This effected changes in the culture of practice (*rules*) being modified to serve the *objective* of creating a cadre of leaders to take over the professional development activities (*rules*). It is clear that as new subjects take on new leadership roles in the professional development schools, rules are mediated, new activities become instruments, and new subjects become new leaders focused on achieving the new or revised goals. As with the other examples, all of these

efforts result in the increased spirit associated with the enhancement of a *community of practice*.

Example # 8: *Leadership Teams and Inquiry*

In one middle school, the leadership team (S) functions as an inquiry group (I). They work together (CoP) solving problems (I) where someone (S) brings a concern to the table and the group (CoP) collects and analyzes data related to the concern (I). The middle school site coordinator (S) explained, "I feel like we have a really strong leadership team (S) in our school between the principal (S), the assistant principal (S), our building resource teacher (S) who is really a main person for staff development (I), the site professor (S), and myself (S). And we've (CoP) worked really hard to facilitate teachers and students learning (O) through our leadership team (DoL) rather than [one person or leader] making decisions and saying this is the way it needs to be done. That's been important."

In this example, the *subjects* are the entire leadership team including school and university representatives. They operate within a *community of practice* using the *instruments* of inquiry, professional development, and group decision-making process focused on data-driven strategies. The *division of labor* is operating through data-collection activities, and the *rules* of acceptable practice are determined by the team (*community of practice*) and mediated where necessary guided by analyses of data. The entire process, *subjects, instruments, and objects* merge into a *community of practice* strengthened as everyone (*division of labor*) in the schools is either involved in providing, collecting, analyzing data, or helping to make data-informed decisions.

Example # 9: *Leadership as School Culture*

Since 1993, the comprehensive high school in this study has been a PDS. There were a number of distributed leadership examples (or density of distributed leadership) from this partner school leadership team:

- Sixteen present faculty (S) received their teaching license (O) through the CU-Denver teacher education program (CoP).
- Thirty-two present faculty members (S) have received or have nearly completed a Master's (O) from UCDHSC.
- Five faculty members (S) are presently in the UCDHSC doctoral program (O) (CoP).
- Ten faculty members (S) have taught university level courses (I).

- Four science faculty members (S) developed regional PRAXIS preparation materials (O) and are scheduled to teach the PRAXIS prep workshops (I).
- Six faculty members (S) are in leadership positions (S) with the UCDHSC Wyoming Science Inquiry Center,
- Eleven faculty members (S) chair (R) school professional development teams (I).
- Six faculty members (S) serve as in-house instructional coaches (S, R).

In this partner school, there are many *subjects*, professional learning is the *objective*, and the partnership, or *community of practice*, is the *instrument* by which many of the opportunities or *objects* for teachers are created and sustained. Leadership itself is the acceptable cultural practice and *sustains* a *community of practice* in which leadership is promoted, shared, embraced, and honored.

Example # 10: *Leadership To and From the School District*

Borrowing from the K-12 *looping* model where children stay with the same teacher for two or more years of instruction, two district schools are promoting an *induction looping* model as an extension to the work in PDS. In this model new teachers (S) will be mentored by their former pre-service mentors (S) during the first several years of teaching. Similar to children whose learning increases because of the multi-year relationship with someone who knows their learning needs, the new teachers (S) will benefit from the sustained relationship with their partner school site professor (S), site coordinator (S), and clinical teachers (S) who know their professional learning needs. With a focus on leadership (O), induction looping (I) is increasing the leadership potential (O) of site professors (S), site coordinators (S), and teacher inductees (S) as well as district administrators (S) involved in the project on a on-going basis. By intermingling K-16 faculty (S) in the process of teacher preparation (I) and the induction of new teachers (I, O) with the objective of teacher quality (O) and retention (O) (especially in high-needs schools), the rules (R) of acceptable cultural practice (R) are changed. The *division of labor* is expanded in this model to include *subjects*, school district and university personnel together with the *objectives* teacher preparation and induction. In addition, it is likely that this model will expand the *community of practice* to the entire school district and beyond.

Focused Leadership or Distributed Leadership

The previous examples provide specific evidence of the existence of distributed leadership in the PDS partnership studied. The codes ascribed to each example provide evidence of the elements of distributed leadership in some of these professional development schools. There has been no attempt in this study to quantify whether a particular partner school falls into either a focused leadership or a distributed-leadership practice mode. One working hypothesis in this study is that on certain days and under some circumstances evidence of focused or distributed leadership could be found. Another hypothesis is that as the density of leadership distributed over time and place increases by intentionally linking *subjects, goals, instruments, rules*, and the *division of labor*, the development and coherence of *community of practice* will be enhanced or strengthened. This initial investigation has demonstrated that the D-LP framework can help other researchers map the existence of distributed-leadership practices in specific PDSs. Additionally, the D-LP framework can be a useful guide for principals, leadership teams, and district administrators as they look to increase the density of their distributed-leadership practices. Using the framework, the intentional collaboration between subjects using common instruments focused on achieving selected school goals, guided by partnership rules and supported by a responsive division of labor can yield a resilient, powerful, and purposeful community of practice.

Implications for Implementing a Distributed-Leadership Practice

The examples above show only a few of the possible scenarios that can happen in professional development schools. The purpose in providing these examples is to illustrate types of distributed leadership that are present and make them more explicit to the partnership. By sharing these specific scenarios with principals, school leadership teams, and district leaders, the intent is to illustrate what was reported by others (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Rogoff, 1990; Silns & Mulford, 2002) that dense and inclusive distributed-leadership practice have a better chance of influencing student learning.

There are some important considerations when thinking about distributed leadership and the concept of leadership density. First, distributed leadership is not delegation. In most if not all of these cases, the leadership activities were not delegated. Instead, they were assumed by individuals who understood benefits and opportunities to the partnership and utilized them in intentional ways. Essentially this can happen in a school where

school leaders and the school culture value and encourage this kind of leadership behavior that typically occurs in a fully functioning and integrated PDS.

Schools that had been in the partnership longer had more examples of leadership (leadership density) being distributed over more subjects (i.e., the high school in Case #9), but all schools had some examples of a distributed-leadership practice, even those that had only been in a partnership for a few months. However, there is a concern about the high turnover rate of principals, site coordinators, site professors, or clinical teachers. For us, this happens too often because these are complex urban schools with difficult retention issues. There also are problems when new adjunct faculty are hired as site professors who come into the partnership with a *traditional mindset* and do not see the potential of the vision of our PDS model. It also takes longer for site coordinators to become part of a distributed-leadership practice when they come from outside the school.

Implications of a Distributed-Leadership Practice for School Principals, Schools, and School Districts

If there is to be an increase in the density and distribution of leadership in schools and school districts, it needs to be an intentional part of the school plan and goal of the partnership. Principals need to be able to look at the resources of the partnership and become *knowledge and experience managers*—managing the leadership potential, and therefore the intellectual capital, within their schools. Principals of professional development schools need to understand they can build a culture empowering leadership from everyone and from any place within the partnership. Being the principal of a PDS means more than just hosting student teachers. Rather, this requires that principals facilitate the distribution of leadership activities over time, place, and subjects. Honoring a practice of distributed leadership must become a core value of the partnership, an integral and intentional instrument used by all participants in the partnership, and an intentional leadership strategy of school and district leaders.

PDSs, like teaching hospitals, can be very powerful. They need to be used as resources for the district, for recruiting, induction, retention, and “growing their own” leaders. As districts recognize the value of the PDS, they need to think of the potential of the added resources these schools can bring to the district. As distributed-leadership practice expands from an individual school to one or more schools, the leadership density in the district may increase. The following are potential positive implications:

1. The number of subjects or actors will increase. All will be in similar categories but will hold the potential for increasing the opportunities for distributed leadership. Care should be taken to look for individual and unique skills in the categories of players and between categories of plays in partner schools.
2. The objectives or actions will be more macro in nature and more comprehensive in scope. Care should be taken to see that a balance is maintained between the macro and micro objectives and critical connection points between the two.
3. The number of types of instruments will be more numerous unless coordinated and more powerful if shared and modified to meet micro needs and be focused on different levels and types of objectives and tasks (micro and macro).
4. Most important are the supporting or impeding rules embodied in the various cultures of practice that expect subjects to participate, support, and engage in the work of the professional development school, or to undermine movement toward engagement and take advantage of the lack of support from district leaders to stymie changes underway in the district.
5. Some of the tasks (macro and micro) may need to be changed or added depending on the size of the expansion. More subjects or actors may need to be added to the personnel equation.
6. Finally, as the distributed-leadership practice is embraced by more schools or a majority of the schools within the district, the chance for a productive and positive community of practice is greatly enhanced.

A Distributed-Leadership Practice Summary

Earlier, it was stated that distributed leadership is not the function of one individual or even a few, but rather, it is distributed across a school or school district through a variety of players and includes the additional elements of objectives, instruments, rules, and divisions of labor. All of these elements are required to build a community of practice. As professional development schools increase and partnerships between schools and universities become more prevalent, the job of meeting the challenges of the day—the emphasis on student learning, increasing achievement, and closing the achievement gap—will require leadership from many in the school or district. To be sure, distributed leadership is not a panacea. However, it is the thoughtful and intentional practice of working together, taking

responsibility, and making “things” happen, especially within the broader school community.

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Nine

Interweaving, Interwoven: Perspective on PDS Leadership from the University with the School

Terry R. Berkeley

He liked seeing the rivers from above. He thought they told stories.

—Kent Nelson (2003)

A Start on the Complexity of the PDS and on PDS Leadership

This is a chapter about PDS leadership from the perspective of one who has had 10 years fully engaged in PDS activity from multiple PDS leadership positions at the university and beyond: department chair, PDS liaison, PDS partnership creator, PDS evaluator, mentor of university interns, and volunteer in PDS partner school classrooms. Adding a further tier of understanding, these views are based upon being a member of one of the initial leader teams during the creation of an extensive university PDS network now in 13 school districts, encompassing more than 1,000 student interns, countless teachers, teacher assistants, administrators, and central office personnel. And, all of this after 15 years of experience working in universities and schools in preparing new teachers, and in the continuing education of school-based educational professionals in three other universities in three states distant one from the other, and several additional years in several school districts, as a principal, an assistant superintendent, and director of special education, across rural, urban, and suburban locales.