

Upcoming Events

- Skillshop Meeting & Education Job Fair, October, 24, 2005 for Interns
- Fall Site Coordinator’s Meeting, October 6, 2005, 4-6pm
- MSDE & TU PDS Research Conference, April, 1, 2006
- National PDS Conference, Orlando Wyndham Resort, March 23-26, 2006
- Principal & Site Coordinator Dinner and Workshop, April 5, 2005

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Towson University-College of Education Wins 2005 Excellence Award for Educational Programs

At the Maryland Association for Supervision and Curriculum and Development (MASCD) Spring Forum, Towson University’s College of Education was presented with the **Excellence in Education Award for Outstanding Program in Teacher Preparation** for its Professional Development School Network. The Towson University’s Professional Development School model is structured for interns to be in the real world of public schools for an entire year; this immersion experience enables the immediate and authentic merger of theory and practice, enhancing the development of the knowledge, skills and practices related to successful teaching.

In granting the award, MASCD stated that, “Towson University’s PDS Network collaboration represents the “best practice” recognized nationwide in collaborative partnerships between higher education and public schools. This far reaching program, not limited to a single school district but, in fact, impacting most of central Maryland, has demonstrated its positive

effects on teacher candidates, current teachers, and—most importantly—on K-12 students’.

Research confirms the positive impact of Towson’s PDS on schools; specifically, research has demonstrated that Towson’s teacher candidates prepared in Professional Development Schools Network remain in the teaching profession longer than candidates prepared outside of the Network. Action research projects and civic engagement projects completed by Towson interns are aligned with School Improvement Plans and directly target student achievement with demonstrated positive effects.

As the largest producer of teachers in Maryland, Towson’s teacher preparation program has also gained national recognition from other educational associations as well.



Thank you for your efforts as we work together to achieve EXCELLENCE!

Comments from a PDS Principal, Timber Grove Elem., Baltimore County

It’s a joy and a privilege to be partners with Towson University. The interns have been enthusiastic and willing to do whatever it takes to learn how to help children achieve. The interns became part of our school family and we’ve been very fortunate to keep some as long term substitutes and/or hire them as teachers. It truly takes a partnership to help young people understand what it really means and takes to

become a teacher. Towson University certainly prepares the students with courses, research, and background that is invaluable. Our part is to put that learning into action. As our partnership matures, we are learning how to take advantage of the opportunities afforded us. We hope to expand our school plan focus on differentiating instruction with a course sponsored by Towson University offered here next year.

Our mentor teachers are becoming more comfortable in advocating for changes and we are fortunate that **Dr. Lijun Jin** is always willing to listen. Our PDS partnership keeps us all growing and learning together and that’s a wonderful place to be.

**Kim Bunch, Principal,
Timber Grove Elementary**

News from Forest Ridge, Jeffers Hill, & Manor Woods PDS,

Picture sorts. Word sorts. Pattern sorts. Match! Show Me. Declare Your Category. Joined at the Roots. Interns and children in three schools in Howard County are playing these games, and more, in order to learn about words and how they are spelled. Thirteen Towson University Elementary Education interns, working at Forest Ridge Elementary, Jeffers Hill Elementary, and Manor Woods Elementary Schools are playing games with individual children and helping the students improve their spelling abilities. The interns are using the ideas and activities that they learned in ELED 429 Principles and Practices of Assessment in Reading and Language Arts, taught by Dr. Karen Robertson to analyze assessments and to provide games for individual children to play with the interns in a one-on-one experience. Each intern assessed a child selected by the classroom teacher as a child who could benefit from extra help with spelling. Using the scoring rubrics discussed in the book, *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* by Donald Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Shane Templeton, and Francine

Johnston, each child was identified as a Letter Name Speller, a Within-Work Pattern Speller, or a Syllables and Affixes Speller. For eight weeks, twice a week, the interns played games with the child in a one-on-one environment. At the end of the eight week period interns again assessed each child to determine recognition of spelling patterns and overall growth in spelling abilities. The results of this intern action inquiry project was positive with an increase in spelling ability in all grade levels. Interns will provide the information they learned about the effectiveness of their interventions with classroom students to the administrators of each school. The action inquiry projects will also be used as artifacts in the interns' program exit Portfolios. All of us involved in the project hope to demonstrate that intern interaction with students in classrooms increases the achievement of the children under their instruction and the school as a whole.

Dr. Karen Roberston, ELED

News from the Ellicott City PDS, Howard County

We held our first PDS Triad Family Math Night Spring 2005. Staff members from all three schools within the PDS and both Elementary and Special Education interns collaborated in the planning and implementation of this Family Night. Over 300 parents and children from the three schools attended and were able to participate in hands-on math activities. Staff members and interns presented a wide variety of activities, games, and math resources that parents and students can use to work and play together. Local business partners including Learning How, Barnes and Noble, Eastern Savings Bank, and the Howard County Public Library participated in this Family Night providing resources for students and their parents. The night was a tremendous success with so many students and parents asking when the next one was scheduled! This was a great opportunity to bring our three staffs together, involve our interns in a school and community based event, and bring our communities together to improve student achievement!

Donna Culan, ELED

News from the North County High, Lindale Middle & Brooklyn Park Middle PDS, Anne Arundel Co.

Mr. Jon Appelt, North County High School, Ms. Ro MacEachen, Lindale Middle School, and Ms. Deborah Piper, Towson University presented a session at the 2005 National Professional Development School conference in Orlando, Florida. The presentation described how Towson University interns have completed service projects that have supported schools goals and helped the interns improve their teaching skills. Mr. Appelt and Ms. MacEachen are the site coordinators for the professional development school partnership with Towson University, and interns from Towson University have worked with AVID to provide tutoring as well as assisting with homecoming, coaching football, and assisting with after school clubs and activities.

Dr. Gloria Neubert, Secondary Education and Dr. Mike Krach, Mathematics presented staff development workshops for teachers at PDS partner schools. The workshops, focusing on reading across the content area strategies and problem-solving strategies in mathematics, will support important school improvement goals. Anne Arundel County will provide stipends, materials, and follow-up support for participants.

TIMS—Electronic Evaluation of Interns

We are pleased to announce that beginning in the fall semester of 2005, all final evaluations of undergraduate interns will be completed electronically through **TIMS (Teacher Internship Management System)**. TIMS is part of PeopleSoft, which is Towson University's main database for student information. All mentor teachers will receive a PeopleSoft account for **TIMS**, unless they already have a PeopleSoft account as a student at Towson University or a faculty member at Towson University. **TIMS** will bring our evaluation process into the modern age of technology and enable us to compile all the evaluation data for our upcoming **NCATE** Accreditation. The Center for Professional Practice will mail contracts to all mentor teachers. It is very important for mentors to complete the contracts and return them within 5 days. The information on the contract is needed to create **TIMS** accounts and/or give mentors access to **TIMS**. Mentors will receive directions for accessing **TIMS** and completing the evaluations. Mentors will also have access to the internship applications that students completed. University supervisors and the Center for Professional Practice 410-704-2567 will be available to assist mentors with **TIMS**.

Carol Stewart, CPP

PDS Network Facts

- * 665 interns graduated last year.
- * Towson partners with 122 different school sites in 12 school systems.
- * Towson interns spent 16,625 hours in service learning last year in PDS's.

Comments & Tips from the Bel Air High PDS Coordinator, Harford County

The main advantage for our school is that the PDS presence has raised the level of professionalism within the entire school; and raised level of expectation instruction going on everyday in every classroom; and, miraculously. The whole faculty has sort of embraced the idea. Our newer employees from the Towson program have infused their departments with technological expertise, up-to-date learning strategies, excitement, and energy; and because of the PDS structure, it is almost an expectation of the newbies that the older members of the department will continue to nurture and mentor the rookies. Amazingly, they have. So their presence here has been a two-way street. The journey hasn't always gone smoothly, but the unexpected benefits have been worth navigating the bumps in the road.

PDS will be extra work, but it will strengthen your school and you will be able to count on the PDS graduates you hire to be your disciples in the field. They require less mentoring from you, but come to you voluntarily more often, and I use them shamelessly to carry the word. When I compare their success and progress to the progress of our new hires who have not been through the PDS, even the ones with experience, the difference is phenomenal. They are less likely to be negatively influenced by the naysayer and have spoken out bluntly to those individuals about how unprofessional it is of them to rant in the faculty room or to always be so pessimistic. They have actually shut down completely some of our more negative people. I can honestly say they have even converted a few. Additionally, because they have never known the institution to be any different than it is, they accept and roll with the ever changing landscape of education. They have become our best role models of positive change behavior. Maybe I am looking through rose-colored glasses, but the positive changes are becoming less subtle and more pronounced. I have seen remarkable progress, and much of it is evident in the new PDS graduates we have hired. The job of the on-site **PDS Coordinator** should be:

Prior to Arrival:

1. Get a Steering Committee in place-two willing teachers (FEA sponsor is good to have on board), a parent, and an administrator to plan how your school will implement the program.
2. Plan a presentation to the faculty informing them that interns will now become a part of the building, sharing the idea of a your school being so excellent that is how now become a part of the building, sharing the idea of a your school being so excellent that it has now become a training site for

prospective teachers, prepping them to be observed during the first semester and to mentor (supervise) interns during the actual student teaching in the second semester. While most of the interns are either English, Social Studies, or Math, I try to invite other faculty members to participate whenever I can so that it feels like a total school effort.

3. Put together a notebook or folder of "need to know" information for the interns (school map, teacher master schedule, bell schedule, school profile, lesson plan template from the New Teacher Guide, and anything else you would do for new teachers).
4. Put together a schedule of observations for the eight weeks they are with you. They will be at the middle school the other weeks. I try to address one or two INTASC Standards for each observation. For example, one of the INTASC principles is about differentiation and another is about Special Education. I combine those as the focus for one set of observations.

First Semester:

1. In our program, the interns arrive at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we do a 15-20 minute seminar on the established focus for the observations. They go out and do two observations, individually or in pairs, take notes and then we debrief from 10:55-11:30 a.m.
2. During the first semester they are supposed to "bit teach", so those are unstructured sessions. I help them make contact with teachers they have observed, plan lessons if they ask for help, access curriculum guides, and then we all debrief together after the bit teaching. In the first half the semester, they just do a drill or a closure activity or part of a lesson. By the second half of the semester, they are more likely to want to do an entire lesson.
3. By the end of their eight weeks, they identify three people in the department with whom they would like to "student teach". The Towson liaison and I sit down and do the matchups. Few teachers willingly take on interns, but if they know the intern has put them at the top of their "Most Wanted" list, they usually can be persuaded.

Second Semester:

1. Prior to start of the semester, we offer a one-day (9-2) preparation for mentors on a voluntary basis. Towson pays them \$100. Nancy and I organize activities to walk them through the process and the expectations: collecting data, giving feedback; gradually turning over the class load; evaluating their performance;

positive mentoring techniques that give interns enough freedom to experiment and enough guidance to not embarrass themselves; what defines acceptable performance vs. unacceptable performance; and the differences between mentoring and supervising. The expectation is that there will be interaction between mentors and interns regardless of how proficient or skilled the intern is.

2. About the fifth week of the internship, I hold a meeting for mentors and remind them that the interns should really be taking over their entire schedule in the fifth, sixth, or seventh week, depending on the ambition of the intern. By the eighth week, they should be gradually taking back their classes. I also give them some information on writing the narrative portion of their evaluation-diplomatic phrasing to use if the intern has been less than proficient, etc. it is an opportunity for them also to share their experiences and get advice from one another if they are having any difficulties.
3. During the final week of the internship, the interns present their professional portfolios. Many of our mentors agree to be evaluators and interviewers, for which they get paid, for about two hours after school.
4. I try to get in and observe every intern so I can give the Principal feedback on who looks good for the "People to be Considered as New Hire Material" list. Then I push him, or an Assistant Principal to get in and see them. I also encourage the interns to invite the administrators in to observe them.

I end up claiming on my time sheets that I spend 2 hours per week doing this. It's probably more like 4-5 first semester. In the second semester, I count time observing as gathering data or direct services to teachers because I am mentoring the mentor teachers and practicing my data gathering skills on interns in the process. I also invite our interns in either semester to attend anything we are doing for new teachers.

It has been a rich and validating experience for our mentor teachers and has contributed much to raising the level of professional pride and excellent teacher modeling among our faculty. It has been great for me to watch some of our interns move through both semesters, become new teachers, and now informally and empathetically mentor our interns and our new teachers-a very valuable cycle for all involved.

Terri Wainwright, Bel Air High



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Site Coordinators' Meeting, October 6, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm
Towson University, University Union,
Chesapeake Rooms I & II
 At this meeting we will discuss the new electronic portfolios, the new required Portfolio process and artifact, including how our interns can determine their impact on P-12 student learning. As always we will have activities for sharing ideas among Site Coordinators.



Principals & Site Coordinators
 Dinner and Workshop



From Parkville High Schools' Towson University PDS, Baltimore County

Dr. Amy Pleet, Rosemary Rappa, Charles Meyer, and Claudia Carlson (SPED Dept.) are working in partnership with Parkville High School on their Small Learning Communities Grant on a project titled "The Parkville Inclusion Project." They provided four Saturday mornings of professional development related to building inclusion at Parkville High School. **Dr. Cynthia Hartzler-Miller and Barri Tinkler (SCED Dept.)** are also working with Parkville High School on their Small Learning Communities Grant with a project titled "Collaborative Action for Student Engagement." They met with teachers in three sessions throughout the Spring semester to address issues of equity and achievement at Parkville High School.

On August 24, 2005, **Dr. Darlene Fewster** and

Rosemary Rappa conducted a Mentor Training Session for Special Education Mentors in the Baltimore County Public School System. Schools represented were Pine Grove Elementary, Pine Grove Middle, Perry Hall Elementary, Oakleigh Elementary, Parkville Middle, Martin Boulevard Elementary, McCormick Elementary, Hawthorne Elementary, Carney Elementary, and Mars Estates Elementary. An overview of the Special Education major was provided. Mentors were provided with syllabi for four SPED courses (internships for Infant/Primary and internships for Elementary/Middle track and the seminar course). **Dr. Jane Williams**, Director of Special Education, spoke about the NCATE process and implications for both university faculty as well as mentor teachers. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

standards and the INTASC standards were provided along with a discussion of how the interns demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the standards. A discussion of the Portfolio Review Process took place and an explanation of the "new artifact" (Standard 8) was provided. In addition, **Carol Stewart**, Assistant Director, Center for Professional Practice demonstrated the process for using electronic internship evaluation (TIMS). Additional Mentor Training Sessions will continue in the Fall.

Dr. Amy Pleet, SPED & Dr. Darlene Fewster, SPED

Professional Development Opportunities

Hopefully you planned some professional development for mentors and interns in your Summer Strategic Planning Workshop. It's not too early to begin planning for spring Towson graduate courses. Call Barbara Clark at 410-704-4367 to

discuss course offerings you may want in your PDS. Talk to your university liaison or call our office if another type of professional development would meet your School Improvement needs.

If you would like to contribute to the PDS newsletter, please email your news to: Karen Schafer, Director, Center for Professional Practice; kschafer@towson.edu

