

**MAXIMIZING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT A  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL:  
Aligning Teacher Expectations with Organizational Structures**

A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of the Education Program  
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In (Partial) Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Masters of Arts

by  
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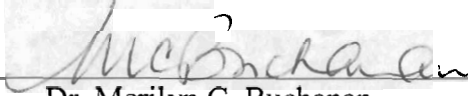
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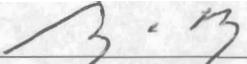
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## Preface

The research and writing of this study was jointly authored and submitted by two candidates for the Master of Arts in Education. The resulting thesis reflects a sustained and cohesive theme. The candidates were teachers working in the same school with complementary interests of study, both believing that inquiry into teachers' everyday professional experiences could effect beneficial changes in the satisfaction levels and professional development needs of their colleagues and ultimately the educational experiences of the students. Together the candidates initiated key ideas, developed the protocols and collected and analyzed data, and equally shared primary responsibility for researching current literature and for writing.

In order to ensure equal participation to this conjointly authored work, at the onset of the project, the two researchers specified the extent and nature of each candidate's fifty percent contribution to the thesis. As each author wrote sections of the work, the other edited and added to the section. The thesis benefits from two lines of inquiry that together enriched the research, as well as from a close collaborative partnership which enabled triangulation of the data, a more analytic interpretation of the results and conversations which helped illuminate findings and conclusions in a way that individual efforts would not have allowed.

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### **Abstract**

This study took place at University Preparation School at CSU Channel Islands, a professional development, PreK-6<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school located in Southern California. The researchers, also teachers at the school, sought answers to the question of teachers' satisfaction, expectations, and needs for personal professional development in the context of working at a Professional Development School. Methods of data collection included teachers' individual Professional Growth Plans, a group needs assessment, two survey/questionnaires, two formal interviews and ongoing, intermittent conversations. Findings revealed four major areas of work-life frustration: program and school culture, professional development, work load distribution, and communication. This paper documents the evolution of how organizational structures were created to address the identified areas of frustration.

### **Background and Statement of the Problem**

This study is an examination of how teachers' professional development is addressed in one Professional Development School (PDS). Two faculty members sought answers and insights into the question; How teachers' job expectations, needs, and satisfaction can be met in a PDS?

This research is especially important to University Preparation School at California State University Channel Islands (UPS) as it strives to meet the professional needs of its teachers and continues to define what it means to be a successful PDS. This research may also prove to be useful in the broader context of what professional development may look like in a school setting.

### ***Background and History***

University Preparation School is a professional development school, Pre-K through sixth grade. It is a charter school that, in 2002, opened simultaneously with the California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) with the explicit purpose of acting as the university's professional development school. At the time that the study took place, the relationship with the University and the PDS functions were limited to training student teachers.

Many students in the multiple subject teacher credentialing program at CSUCI fulfill their observation and student teaching requirements on the UPS campus. UPS also provides service learning experiences for undergraduate students, and has the potential for capstone projects and for applied and action research. There is a faculty liaison appointed by CSUCI to UPS and during the first two years, UPS and CSUCI worked collaboratively to create the assessment tools used to evaluate student teachers. Representatives of the two faculties met often to discuss student teacher requirements and protocols. This type of interaction is now less frequent. While some UPS teachers have participated in action research only a few projects have come to fruition.



The teachers at UPS have at least three years of public school experience and have distinguished themselves with exemplary teaching skills and leadership potential. Most teachers hold tenured positions in Ventura County school districts. They are released from their districts on temporary leaves of absence to teach at UPS as Master Teachers for a term of two to five years with the intent to return to their home districts to share what they learned from their experience at the PDS. Each teacher brings distinctive personal notions regarding professional development, schooling, the nature of school culture, what it means to collaborate, and attitudes towards teaching and learning.

The curriculum at UPS is based on the California State Standards. Students are taught in multi-age clusters that loop for one year with the same teacher. Differentiated instruction supports a developmentally appropriate environment where students can move freely as their skill needs change. The children participate in an extensive fine arts program including music, art, drama, sculpture, and band, as well as, enrichment classes in literature, cultural studies, and agriculture.

Multilingualism is a key component to the UPS curriculum. UPS offers two different language strands. One is a dual language immersion program with the goal of bi-literacy in English and Spanish. The second is a program with the goal of language enrichment through basic vocabulary building and auditory and oral language development in Spanish.

The school day is structured to allow grade level teachers to collaborate during structured teacher planning time. This time is referred to as Active Collaboration Team Time (ACTT). The school's charter defines this as time for teachers to discuss student progress, curriculum, and current research. However, grade level teams have interpreted the expectations of ACTT differently.

A second structured collaborative time occurs when professional development Councils meet. These Councils were created as a result of the data gathered during the initial stages of this study and were designed as an internal structure to support a system of self-governance and increase leadership capacity. Councils are represented by teachers from each grade band. They focus around three major areas, curriculum, language support, and school development. (see Appendix A for Council structure)

### ***Origin of the Research***

At the end of the school's third year in 2004, as part of their graduate studies, two faculty members conducted a series of teacher interviews in which teachers were asked to discuss the school's organizational structures, teachers' work lives and job satisfaction. In analyzing the findings, some common trends and some interesting discrepancies emerged between people's perceptions regarding job satisfaction and the effectiveness of the collaboration that was taking place between teachers. These findings were shared with the school administrator.

Simultaneously the administration introduced a new self-evaluation tool for teachers, known as the Professional Growth Plan (PGP). The administrator stated that the information disclosed in the PGP, regarding goals and professional growth at UPS, revealed data that was complimentary to data gathered through interviews. It was determined that the data gathered was sufficient enough to warrant further investigation in order to begin to find effective solutions. The administration and the researchers, together with the CSUCI liaison, worked together to design a structure to support the professional needs of teachers. The team began to look into research to inform decisions and guide the process.

The theoretical approach of the research reported here is based on organizational theories from the private sector and recent research from the education community regarding Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), professional development schools (PDSs), and teachers' professional development.

Extensive research regarding professional development and PLCs has been undertaken in the private sector. Many theories have been put forth regarding management, job satisfaction and professional growth for private industries, but until recently, little of this research has been conducted in the field of education.

Researchers in the field of education such as, Darling-Hammond (1995), DuFour and DuFour (1998, 2005), Guskey (2000) and Fullan (2001) Reeves (2000, 2004) and Roberts & Pruitt (2003) have laid the groundwork for the changes in the models of teachers' professional development. Research regarding adult learners suggests that professional development is most effective when it is job-embedded and ongoing. (Roberts & Pruitt, 2003)

This research in conjunction with data collected in the private industry by such researchers as Maslow (1943, 1974), Culbert & McDonough (1980) and Senge (2000) which demonstrated for many years that employees are motivated by intrinsic rewards were foundational in developing the professional development model at UPS.

It is the intention that professional development at UPS will be served by creating an organizational structure based on collaboration, reflection and self-motivation that aligns with student needs.

### ***Description of the Research Design and Methodology***

Data gathered was both quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed by two parties which allowed for triangulation of the research findings. The

quantitative data was gathered through a web-based survey and collated by the computer program.

Initial interviews indicated that teachers were dissatisfied in their work lives. Each teacher at UPS completed a Professional Growth Plan as a guide for personal reflection and goal setting. Teachers were also asked to participate in a group needs assessment activity to reveal school-wide areas of concern. As a result, cross-grade level Councils were developed to address these areas. Councils provided the opportunity for articulation and collaboration. Two surveys and additional interviews were conducted to monitor the progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the Councils.

### ***Limitations of the Study***

Although this study has rich data, it also has limitations. The main limitations are centered around a small sample set from a rotating staff, and the unique qualities associated with UPS being both a charter school and a professional development school.

## **Review of the Literature and Related Research**

One of the tenets of the UPS charter is its role as a professional development school (PDS). The organizational structure is complex. One layer supports UPS as a professional development school by attempting to create a mutually advantageous collaborative environment between CSUCI and UPS. CSUCI students participate on the campus through observations, student teaching assignments and service learning. Another layer of the structure within UPS is conducive to its establishment as a professional learning community (PLC). The intention is to create an environment to develop, apply and modify research-based educational practices through methods such as collaboration, then disseminate the information throughout districts in Ventura County. In essence, it is about creating professional relationships at the school, collegiate and county level and transforming the traditional role of teachers and administrators.

Research regarding both PDSs and PLCs reveals an important shift in the traditional role of the teacher. DuFour et al. (2005) write, “Schmoker (2004) has cited ‘a broad, even remarkable concurrence’ among educational researchers and organizational theorists who have concluded that developing the capacity of educators to function as members of professional learning communities is the ‘best-known means by which we might achieve truly historic, wide-scale improvements in teaching and learning’” (p.7) In these models, the roles of teachers and university faculty extend beyond the classroom. Administrators are advised to create environments that encourage and support this shift. It is an effort to further professionalize education in order to maximize student learning.

### *Professional Development Schools*

The notion of a professional development school was first introduced by the Holmes Group (1986). Since then researchers such as Teitel (1992) and Goodlad (1993) have advocated the need to reform teachers' professional development and professional development schools have emerged as an avenue to reform and improve education. These reform efforts involve teachers in significant ways that extend beyond what has typically been isolated classroom practice. Professional development schools are established through the partnership of a university and a school. The purpose of a PDS is to improve classroom instruction by bringing research into classrooms, continuing the education of teachers through collaboration with university staff and colleagues, and providing prospective teachers with opportunities to practice skills. The structure calls for collaboration between university and school educators to develop, implement and disseminate research-based practices.

Professional development schools are fairly recent and are identified by specific criteria. Book (1996) writes, "Professional development schools are such new institutions that most are in the process of evolving, and the research being conducted in these settings or about these setting is in very formative stages." (p.196) Book continues that this newness results in limited published research on PDS's and what has been published focuses on the structural elements, school culture, teacher roles, relationships and collaboration.

What does emerge from the limited research is recognition of the complexity in creating and sustaining a PDS. Book (ibid), "The clash of the cultures of the schools and the universities and the difficulty in overcoming different goals, reward structures, time commitments, and perspectives on teaching and learning make collaboration difficult. Even after agreements have

been reached, it is difficult to sustain the relationships over a long period of time;” (Book, op cit, p.205)

Research by Ruscoe et al. (1989) focuses on the feelings teachers had regarding their involvement in a PDS. They conclude that “those who feel the most empowered also feel the most efficacious”. ( p.16) In their research they refer to teachers’ discovery of the reality of a more demanding workload involved in participating in a PDS. They describe teachers’ realizations that impacts of the increased workload are not immediately evident. Despite additional work, teachers reported that teaming encouraged more teacher participation and feelings of efficacy and that the supportive attitudes of both faculty and administration played a crucial role in restructuring efforts.

Another feature of a PDS is the assumption of collaboration with university faculty. The expanded role of university faculty in a PDS is discussed by Brookhart and Loadman (1992). They identified the following challenges in creating a PDS culture: the focus on theory amongst university faculty versus the focus on practice amongst teachers, the time to collaborate, the expectation of rewards vary between university faculty and teachers, as well as the issue of power. Even if these challenges are overcome there is also the question of sustainability. “University faculty are drawn to other projects, teachers tire of having the added responsibilities of research and teacher education, and administrators change, thus taking away support.” (Book, op cit, p. 205) Murrell (1998) in examining the role of PDS’s in renewing urban education similarly found that “...every aspect that writers reported as a positive outcome of the PDS did not result from the PDS structure, but rather was the result of what people *did with*, and *added to*, that structure.” (p. 15)

### *Professional Learning Communities*

A professional learning community is one example of what can be achieved within that structure. Current research indicates a strong consensus among leading educational researchers of the potential for powerful, meaningful change in education through the creation and implementation of professional learning communities. DuFour et al. (2005, p. 7) state “there has never been greater consensus regarding the most powerful strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement.” Schmoker (2005, p. 144) makes the same point, “Despite the still-dismaying shortage of such professional learning communities, their effectiveness cannot be denied: over the years, innumerable and prominent researchers have confirmed their simple power.”

DuFour (2005, p. 32) identifies the following key characteristics of professional learning communities, which he refers to as the “big ideas”. They are a shift in focus from teaching to learning, the need for a powerful culture of true collaboration and a focus on results. Another key component regards a change in ideas about effective staff development and the manner in which it has traditionally been conducted.

The first big idea is the emphasis on learning rather than teaching. DuFour (2005, p. 34) states that, commonly, teachers focus on the teaching of content. When learning does not take place, schools lack a systematic approach for intervention. He writes, “When a school begins to function as a professional learning community, however, teachers become aware of the incongruity between their commitment to ensure learning for all students and their lack of a coordinated strategy to respond when some students do not learn. The staff of a PLC addresses this discrepancy by designing strategies to ensure that struggling students receive additional time and support, no matter who their teacher is.” Responses are “systematic” and “schoolwide”.



The second requires a school culture which promotes collaboration. DuFour et al. (2005, p. 16) have found, “The research in support of the benefits of collaboration is exhaustive, as is the research that links collaborative cultures to improving schools.” The type of collaboration referred to by PLC proponents goes far beyond simple conversations and collegiality. DuFour and Eaker (1998) warn,

Providing teachers with time for collaboration does not ensure that they will engage in deep discourse about how they can achieve the goals of the school more effectively. In fact, without the proper training, much of what occurs in schools in the name of collaboration can be counter-productive.” (p. 125)

Based on research findings, true collaboration is a skill that must be developed through training and practice. The training must incorporate the development of communication skills. Ramsey (1999) writes, “...communication is too important to leave to chance. Good leaders don’t let internal or external communication just happen. To be effective, it needs to be carefully planned, systematically managed, and continuously monitored and refined.” (p. 172)

If true collaboration does not occur by simply creating a structure that allows for staff to meet, then the question has to be raised, what factors are critical? DuFour and Eaker (1998) identify the following requirements for collaboration to succeed: collaboration time must be built into the daily school schedule, the purpose of the collaboration must be explicit, participants must be trained and supported as effective collaborators and participants must accept their roles and responsibilities as participants.

The third identifying factor of a PLC is that it is results driven. The ultimate purpose of a PLC is to have a profound effect upon student achievement. Saphier (2005, p. 88) writes, “Believing that all students have innate capacity and that academic ability can be grown is a *definitional element* of professional learning communities.” Teachers take responsibility for the

success off all students. DuFour (2005, p. 36) explains, “The powerful collaboration that characterizes professional learning communities is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice. Teachers work in teams, engaging in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep team learning. This process, in turn, leads to higher levels of student achievement.”

There are many variables involved in the success of a PLC. The structural level involves daily collaboration time, the identification of teams, resource acquisition and distribution, and the process of shared decision making. The manner in which to develop leadership capacity amongst staff must also be addressed.

School-based management and shared governance is one model for restructuring. In this model, schools have autonomy in decisions regarding curriculum, hiring and the budget. Decision making is shared by administrators, teachers and parents and there are increased opportunities for teacher collaboration. In PLCs teachers are called upon to extend their traditional roles. Lezotte (2005, p. 181) writes “high levels of sustained commitment can only be realized when the affected individuals are involved and engaged in planning the changes they are expected to execute.”

Newmann (1993) warns, however, that school-based management teams must have an identified purpose and an ability to apply theory. As he reminds, “Structure without substantive purpose leads nowhere in particular...” (p. 4) Sprinthall et al. (1996) refer to a study conducted by Lieberman et al. in which the authors illustrate “... the persistence of conflict, the difficulty of changing teachers’ roles, and the necessity of integrating content with process.” (p.681) It is not the structure of decentralization alone that will bring about teachers’ commitment and professional development. As Sprinthall et al. themselves propose, “What is needed for this

particular form of teacher professional development is the acquisition of a particular domain of competencies and a shared set of commitments to guide practice.” (p.681)

### ***Professional Development***

New ideas are emerging in regards to adult learning and teacher development for acquiring professional competency and improving practice. Traditionally, staff development has been an external process, for example attending workshops and seminars. Professional learning community proponents contend that professional development is more powerful and meaningful if it is site-specific, job-embedded and occurs daily through practice, reflection and collaboration. DuFour et al. (2005) write, “The American Federation of Teachers (2004) has endorsed the premise that teachers should be engaged in a ‘continuous process of individual and collective examination and improvement of practice,’ and that staff development should be ‘job-embedded and site-specific’ ...” (p. 8) The authors stress, “There is now general agreement that the most powerful staff development is job-embedded—teachers learning together as part of their routine work practice.” (p. 248)

Adult learners “need to connect new concepts to what they already know in order to make use of new ideas. They learn best when the new concepts and skills are related to real-life circumstances. This is one reason that job-embedded staff development is so effective. Adults need follow-up support...to help them transfer their new skills into everyday practice.” (Roberts & Pruitt, p. 60)

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) attempt to define today’s concept of professional development. “(It)... means providing occasions for teachers to reflect critically on their practice and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners.” For such professional development to be effective, the roles of the participants must also change;

teachers must be involved “as learners and as teachers,” and they should “struggle with the uncertainties that accompany each role.” (pp. 1-2) They identified several characteristics involved in effective professional development:

- it requires teaching, assessment, observation and reflection,
- it must be collaborative,
- it must be based on student work, and
- it must be sustained and on-going.

Fullan (2005, p.19) sees collaboration as a way to ensure capacity building, he describes this as stemming from “the daily habit of *working together*, (which) you can’t learn ... from a workshop or course. You need to learn it by doing it and getting better at it on purpose.”

The context for professional development schools is unique in that change in the curriculum and pedagogy does not emanate to collaboration at just the school level. While professional development schools attempt to bridge the distance between research and theory and daily practice through teacher and university faculty collaboration, as Sprinthall et. al. (1996, pp.697-699) point out, “Collaboration... is a requisite, yet it is extraordinarily difficult. ...the lack of collaboration, especially and perhaps ironically on school university collaborative research, severely restricts the ability to build a tolerable consensus for research theory and practice in teacher development.”

The model proposed by Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (ibid) seeks to change the traditional structure of top-down, directive reform and allows professional development to take place in the teacher’s context. They write, “The changed curriculum and pedagogy of

professional development will require new policies that foster new structures and institutional arrangements for teachers' learning.” (p. 2)

Of key importance here is the creation of a fluid infrastructure that is conducive to reflection, collaboration, experimentation and one driven by student and teacher needs. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) write, “Policies that support teachers' learning communities allow such structures and extra-school arrangements to come and go and change and evolve as necessary, rather than insist on permanent plans or promises. What does need to be a permanent addition to the policy landscape is an infrastructure or ‘web’ of professional development opportunities that provides multiple and on-going occasions for critical reflection and that involves teachers with challenging content.” (Darling-Hammond, op cit, p.4)

This type of environment is not commonly found in most schools. It requires an infrastructure that was purposefully created to support fluidity, reflection, creativity and collaboration. It also requires the participation of purposeful teachers who are not only willing, but are seeking to transform themselves as educators. Therefore, there is a degree of self-initiative, self-guidance and critical self-reflection that a teacher must possess to fully take advantage of the professional development school and professional learning community environment. Sprinthall writes, “Learning that impacts cognitive structure and promotes more complex cognitions requires the active participation of the learner.” (Sprinthall p.687)

Ideally a teacher's concept of personal professional development would serve, or align with, the needs of the school. This concept of alignment is described by Culbert and McDonough (1980, p.1) “...an individual possesses and ‘effective’ alignment when the orientation directing that person's actions and views of reality allows him or her to represent important self-interests while making a contribution to the organization.”

It is in the private sector that these opportunities are typically provided. As Senge (1995) writes, "...business has a freedom to experiment missing in the public sector and, often, in non-profit organizations." (Senge, p. 24) However, the environment of a professional development school and professional learning community that encourages experimentation, questioning and collaboration raises challenges and provides many opportunities for teachers to be thrown into disequilibrium. When done reflectively, responses to these feelings of disequilibrium can lead to professional growth.

A study of seven professional development schools conducted by Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster and Cobb in 1995 concluded that the schools in the study tended to elicit a greater degree of teacher commitment. They reported that 70% of the teachers in their study changed the way they reflected on practice and 61% reported a change in their notion of collegial work, while 55% reported changes in their methods of teaching.

The current perspective of continued effective professional development is summed up by Guskey (2000), "Professional Development is not an event that is separate from day-to-day professional responsibility. Rather, Professional Development is an on going activity woven into the fabric of every educator's professional life." (p. 78-81)

## **Methodology**

Data was collected using a variety of methods which included Professional Growth Plans that were collected by the administration. Keeping current research in mind, it was the intention of UPS to design and implement an effective professional development model that would meet and satisfy the needs of teachers. Specific types of training and program alterations were made based on information gathered from the surveys. On-going surveys were conducted to gather data concerning the changes and to measure the effectiveness of them as perceived by the teachers.

All data used in this research were gathered according to the CSUCI Institutional Review Board (IRB) legal and ethical protocols. All data will be stored in a secured cabinet in a UPS office until destroyed by the superintendent.

### ***Participant Set***

The participants for this study were all the teachers at UPS during the 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 school years. The UPS staffing procedures are unique in that the teachers come to UPS on a leave of absence from a variety of local Ventura County school districts. They bring with them a variety of educational backgrounds, job experiences, and cultural backgrounds.

At the onset of data collection, there were 3 men and 17 women ranging in age from 26 to 55. The selection choice was defined by the school. The researchers propose that this is a fairly representative set of teachers. Women typically outnumber men in elementary teaching positions. The age range is a reflection of teaching being a long career path or may be indicative of late entry into the career.

Due to the two academic year time frame of the study and the staffing rotation, the population of the study was subject to change. This study was designed to address specific issues at UPS. During the study, information was gathered from all staff members in order to gain a broad perspective of the issues although not all staff members participated in each data set. Due to anonymity it was not possible to track each teacher’s participation rate. Participation rates are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Participant Set For Each Data Collection Instrument*

Item	Number of Participants
Interview 1	4
Professional Growth Plan	19
Group Needs Assessment	19
Survey 1	17
Web-Based Survey 2	17
Interview 2	2

Participants voluntarily participated in all surveys, interviews, and activities associated with the study. The majority of the data collection and activities took place during regular school hours. The surveys were designed to maintain anonymity so as to encourage candid feedback. Interviewees were also told their identification would be held confidential.

UPS staff completed Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) as part of their professional development requirement. Data from the PGPs was used with full permission. In staff meetings the teachers were told that their responses would be used for research data and that their names would be held confidential.



The researchers followed ethical guidelines by informing participants of the purposes of the research and ensuring participants that their identity would be held confidential in order to protect them from risks, such as embarrassment, liability or administrative sanctions. (Erickson, 1986)

### ***Data Collection Instruments and Procedures***

A variety of data collecting instruments were used in order to provide different media for teacher responses. All data gathered represented teachers' own voices. Using a variety of data collection methods allowed the researchers to triangulate the findings, thus rendering them more reliable. (Erickson, 1986) Multiple data collection instruments were used in this study: teachers' individual PGPs, a group needs assessment, two survey/questionnaires, two formal interviews and ongoing, intermittent conversations. All participants were informed of and consented to the potential use of the information for staff development and research purposes.

The study can be considered internally valid because multiple data sources were used. The data collected were scrutinized by two people resulting in the potential for a more balanced interpretation. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Interviews provided qualitative data based on the ability for interviewees to elaborate their ideas. Interviewers were able to ask clarifying questions. The interviews provided the opportunity to note emotional responses. Written surveys provided teachers with time to reflect on their responses and open-ended questions allowed for further explanation and input. Quantitative data were collected by asking teachers to rate specific program features and experiences. Web-based surveys allowed for a quantitative interpretation of the data collected.

Because there were several data sources, the methods and protocols will be described chronologically in the following section.

**Interview 1.** In May 2005, formal interviews were conducted with four teachers using common guiding questions. Interviewees were asked, “What do you feel is your role in the school’s organization?” Additional questions focused on the organizational structures, teacher work lives, and job satisfaction. A sampling of interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

The initial interviews were conducted one on one with two interviews being carried out by each researcher. The interviews were originally conducted as part of a graduate project but were used with permission for the purpose of this project. The researchers chose to conduct interviews in order to provide teachers with the opportunity to elaborate their answers. The interviews also provided opportunities for the researchers to read nonverbal cues and ask clarifying questions. Interviewees were chosen to provide a sampling of various grade levels and years of experience at UPS. The researchers sought to identify common trends.

**Professional Growth Plan.** In June 2005, the Professional Growth Plan (PGP) was designed and implemented by UPS administration for the purposes of staff development and the collection of research data. The PGP is made up of a series of open-ended questions focused on reflection and goal setting. (Appendix C) Included in the questions was, “What would you identify as your greatest area of strength?” Once teachers had completed their PGP, they were given to the principal. Tri-annually, teachers reflect upon their own identified goals and revise the PGP as needed. The data from these documents were used with permission.

**Group Needs Assessment.** In June 2005, teachers were asked to work both individually and collaboratively to identify successes of the institution and to identify and prioritize areas of concern. The group needs assessment activity was developed to gain a broader perspective of teacher attitudes, concerns, expectations, and level of satisfaction. Teachers generated areas of concern individually then shared the results to identify common themes. These themes were then

ranked according to how teachers had prioritized them. The intention of the needs assessment was to recognize successes and identify school-wide goals for the upcoming school year.

(Appendix D)

**Survey 1.** In October 2005, teachers were asked to complete a survey to evaluate the infrastructure of the newly established Councils and the effectiveness of collaboration during the meetings. The administration and researchers were aware of the importance of effective communication in collaborative efforts, therefore at the beginning of the school year teachers participated in an inservice on communication norms. A major purpose of this survey was to gauge whether or not these meeting norms were being adhered to. The survey consisted of four open-ended questions, one of which was: What was your overall feeling about the established format for Councils? (Appendix E)

**Web-Based Survey 2.** In May 2006, teachers completed a web-based survey made up of a series of statements each of which the participants were asked to rate on a five point Likert Scale, with five being the highest rating. The instrument included double blind statements to check for consistency in responses. Teachers were asked to respond to statements about attitudes toward Councils, collaboration time, and their perceptions of professional growth. For example: Time spent in Councils provided personal and professional growth; and Leadership roles were equitably distributed amongst Council members. The following questions were also used: Do you think Council work has, or will have, a positive impact on student success at UPS? Why or why not? Does your work in Councils empower you as a decision maker in the school? Why or why not? (see Table 2 in Findings)

**Interview 2.** In May 2006, one researcher conducted two further interviews as a follow-up to informal conversations that were held during the school year. One interviewee was a

teacher who would be returning to the school the following year and one exiting teacher who had decided to return to her home district after one year at UPS. The interviewer focused the conversation around the themes of professional development and job satisfaction, while not adhering to a formal question and answer protocol.

### *Limitations of the Study*

The questionnaires used in this study could not be considered externally reliable because they were designed specifically for a small group of teachers at one school. Because UPS is a professional development school, teachers came to the campus with specific expectations for professional development but also a degree of uncertainty about the organizational structure of the school. The use of curriculum, the expectation of participation in collaborative groups and the multiage setting are not typical of a traditional school setting.

The limitations of this study are primarily related to the participant set and the time frame. The participant set changed slightly over the eighteen months due to the nature of staffing at UPS. The nature of the rotating staff resulted in the inability to track changes in individual teacher's perceptions over time.

Information collected during the second school year of the study included new teachers who had different background experiences, different needs and different experiences with collaboration than their more experienced colleagues. Data collected from new teachers participating in the surveys could provide comparative data to show how needs change as teachers mature, however it could not provide information regarding the new teachers' experiences from year to year.

Also, changes in teaching assignments for some teachers may have had either a positive or negative impact on their perceptions. This resulted in difficulty in attributing any changes in teacher attitudes to differences in job positions or actual structural changes of the organization.

Data were not collected during the first two years that UPS operated. Formal interviews and surveys were not used and therefore, formal data regarding previous exiting staff members' concerns was not gathered. Surveys collected data that focused on Council work and could have been broadened to gather feedback on grade level collaboration time as well.

## **Findings**

This study took place at University Preparation School at CSU Channel Islands, a professional development, PreK-6<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school located in Southern California. The school opened in 2002 and at the time of this study had approximately 480 students. The researchers, also teachers at the school, sought answers to the question of teachers' satisfaction, expectations, and needs for personal professional development in the context of working at a Professional Development School. (PDS)

Methods of data collection included teachers' individual Professional Growth Plans (PGPs), a group needs assessment, two survey/questionnaires, two formal interviews and ongoing, intermittent conversations. Having data interpreted by two researchers, who are also faculty members and have the advantage of proximity, provided the opportunity for cross-validation.

### ***Initial Interviews***

The initial interviews were conducted during the spring of 2005, the third year that the school had been in operation. (These findings, reported below, gave rise to follow-up surveys and further interviews.) UPS teachers' comments indicated four major areas of work-life frustration in the context of a newly established Professional Development School: 1) working in a setting that was in the midst of developing its program and culture, 2) the lack of a clear, shared definition of professional development, 3) the multiple layers of teachers' responsibilities, and 4) the presence of dominating personalities who were responsible for ineffective communication during collaboration time. These four areas are organized in the findings under

the following headings; Program and School Culture, Professional Development, Workload Distribution, and Communication.

### ***Developing a Program and a School Culture***

Some interviewees expressed their misconceptions about the extent to which UPS had neither a fully established program nor an institutionalized culture. One interviewee thought that by the third year there would have been more of a foundation in place. This statement was supported by another interviewee who thought she would be coming to a school that already had a program in place and did not realize that the school was in the process of developing its philosophy and its program. Another interviewee, at the end of her first year, stated that, “New teachers are sometimes lost because they don’t really completely understand the traditions and culture of the school.”

### ***Professional Development***

The initial interview data revealed that some staff members were disappointed in their expectations about what it meant to work at a professional development school. The pervasive perception of professional development was that teachers would be receiving workshops and trainings. One interviewee, after one year of working at UPS, stated his biggest disappointment had been the lack of staff development. His expectation was that professors from CSUCI would be coming to the school to disseminate knowledge to the UPS staff.

### ***Workload Distribution***

One teacher interviewed reflected on her first year’s experience and stated that she had misconceptions about teacher responsibilities and the school program. Interviewees discussed their struggles with teacher responsibilities which extended beyond the classroom. Another interviewee, a founding staff member, stated that what had evolved was an unequal distribution

of the workload. These findings support the research regarding the reality of an increased workload in a PDS. (Book, p. 198) The teacher further expressed that there were only a few teachers who worked on the majority of the committees or who put in extra time on special projects. She went on to state that these teachers can get “burned out”. She recommended that responsibilities should be distributed in such a way that more than just a few people carry the load. These notions of the importance of shared contribution to reduce feelings of inequity and prevent burnout are supported in the DuFour’s research on PLCs. (DuFour et.al., p. 181)

Another teacher stated that while working on a grant team she felt “... really pulled because we have to meet every day after school and many days during school. Since it is my first year and I am not settled yet, I am struggling with figuring out how to do something so involved and still be a good teacher.”

### ***Communication***

Difficulties with effective communication during collaboration were expressed by the interviewees. One teacher expressed frustration with learning how to deal with the “Alpha” mentality. She indicated that problems arose during Active Collaborative Team Time (ACTT). She reported feeling “bullied” and under-valued and that effective communication was not taking place. This was confirmed by another interviewee: “there are a lot dominating personalities (and) there is not a lot of listening going on.” He stated that due to teachers’ egos, making compromises was difficult, reporting that ACTT is “...a lot of people trying to convince others of what they want to do.” To him, collaboration time was “neither productive nor democratic”.

### ***Professional Growth Plan***

UPS teachers submit a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) each year outlining their personal professional goals for the coming year. Throughout the year the PGPs are reflected upon and



refined. Supporting information gathered in the interviews, half of the incoming teachers felt that learning a new program would be their greatest challenge for the year. UPS added sixth grade during this study. The teacher hired to teach the sixth grade class wrote that his greatest challenge would be “starting a sixth/intermediate level from scratch.” As one might expect, new teachers identified “learning about the UPS culture” as part of their professional goals for the year. The impact of the environment was summed up by one teacher who stated her goal was “simply to survive.” This statement is supported by the research done by Fuller and Brown (1975) which identifies various stages of teacher development. It is typical for beginning teachers to be more concerned about simply surviving the day. Veteran teachers, finding themselves in a new environment, once again felt as though they were novices just hoping to survive their new situation.

Continuing and exiting staff identified a variety of challenges and goals in their surveys. What can be noted is, as may be expected, that needs are not static but dynamic. Based on the information gathered in the interviews and the PGPs, the researchers decided to conduct a group needs assessment to identify and prioritize needs in the broader context of the school.

### ***Group Needs Assessment***

A group needs assessment was conducted in June 2005. Teachers were asked to identify and rank goals for the upcoming school year in five broad areas: 1)students, 2)school community, 3)curriculum, 4)professional community and 5)aligning school programs with the school’s mission statement. In the area of professional community, teachers identified training for multiage and time scheduling as critical areas of need. Another critical area of need identified was the opportunity for teachers to meet with other grade levels for the purpose of developing a curriculum scope and sequence. Overall, the staff identified in total 52 goals.

The researchers developed Councils to satisfy the need for cross-grade level articulation, a more equitable distribution of the workload and to accomplish the goals that had been prioritized in the group needs assessment activity. Information collected from teacher interviews and the needs assessment led to staff-wide training in communication norms prior to the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year.

### *Survey 1*

In October 2005 surveys were administered to gauge the effectiveness of the recently implemented Councils. Responses indicated that 82% of teachers expressed a positive overall feeling about the format of the Councils that had been established. Responses included positive comments such as, "I like the fact that we get to meet and talk vertically with the other grade levels," "I enjoyed meeting with new people from other grade levels," "First time we could talk cross grade," and one teacher wrote, "Councils are small/intimate and that lends itself to respect and trust." One teacher stated "I was a little bit nervous about more work, but from what I see now everyone is dedicated to meaningful work."

The notion of talking across grades was important for two reasons. Firstly, just four months earlier teachers had expressed concern about the lack of cross-level communication; secondly, they had reported being extremely dissatisfied with the nature of communication during ACTT. The survey evaluated the effect of training in group norms to ameliorate the problem. Of primary concern was determining if the Councils were adhering to the group meeting norms the staff had agreed on during the staff-wide training in communication norms prior to the beginning of the school year. When asked if meeting norms were adhered to during Council meetings, 82% of teachers responded positively.

While the majority of findings were either positive or neutral there were exceptions based on earlier concerns that all voices may not be heard in the meetings. While one respondent, contemplating the multiple structures now in place, wondered, "...how we are going to do it all...?" overall the findings suggest that cross level articulation was both beneficial and welcomed.

### ***Web-Based Survey 2***

Data was collected from a Web-Based Survey in May 2006 (see Table 2). This was designed to allow the researchers to gather additional insights and information regarding the themes that emerged in the original interviews and PGPs.

***Program and School Culture.*** Almost half of the teachers (44%) indicated that the Councils they were a member of lacked focus. One teacher wrote, "We don't have an expert helping to guide the team." However some teachers were positive about the potential for the Councils if a clear goal was identified.

As one teacher stated, "I know the potential is there, but I didn't feel like the focus was in place for that to happen this year." Another wrote, "I think that the Councils have the potential to have a positive impact on student success at UPS. There were many times when the meetings were unproductive because there was not a clear focus or goal."

***Professional Development.*** Two-thirds of teachers responded that tasks accomplished in Councils were significant in meeting the goals of the school. More than half of the faculty (59%) responded that participation in Councils provided opportunities to develop leadership skills. Overall, the survey results indicated that 56% of the teachers felt that time spent in Councils provided for their personal professional growth.

Table 2

*Web-Based Survey Prompts and Teacher Response Percentages*

Survey Prompts	Teacher Responses			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 4	All Years
Cross grade level collaboration during Council time was beneficial in broadening my school-wide perspective.	69%	69%	66%	71%
Time spent in Councils provided personal professional growth	58%	63%	49%	56%
Meeting norms provided a structure to facilitate effective communication	69%	67%	50%	65%
Leadership roles were equitably distributed amongst Council members.	67%	61%	57%	62%
Council meetings were an infringement on my time.	49%	46%	66%	54%
The Councils I participated in were focused on a clear goal.	58%	63%	46%	56%
Council meetings were dominated by one or two individuals.	40%	46%	57%	47%
Tasks accomplished in Councils were significant in meeting the goals of the school.	69%	67%	60%	66%
Councils provided a risk free environment where all voices could be heard.	73%	73%	54%	66%
Council members were regular in attendance.	69%	60%	57%	66%
Council tasks created an additional burden on my workload.	47%	50%	63%	54%
Participation in Councils provided opportunities for me to develop my leadership skills.	53%	61%	50%	59%
Communication norms identified at the beginning of the year were adhered to during meetings.	63%	69%	40%	64%
Banked time could have been used more productively	53%	59%	69%	60%

The data was disaggregated to allow the researchers to investigate the number of years of teaching at UPS as a factor impacting teachers' responses to Councils. More than half of both the first year (58%) and second year (63%) teachers indicated that time spent in Councils provided personal professional growth. However, less than half of teachers (49%) in their fourth year at UPS indicated that Councils provided personal professional growth. These findings indicate that when compared to teachers with less tenure, the perception of teachers in their fourth year at the school was that Councils provided less personal professional growth.

Cross/grade-level collaboration was identified as a positive component of Councils by 44% of the teachers. One teacher expressed this by writing:, "Councils provide an opportunity to dialogue between the grade level strands...It also allowed me a chance to get to know people I otherwise would not have interacted [with]." Another wrote, "What is nice about the Councils is that a small group of people have a productive conversation, with the view point of the various grade levels represented." Teachers became better informed about challenges faced by their colleagues across the school. As one teacher stated, "Working in the Councils with teachers from across the grades has helped me to know more about the issues other grades face. It also has helped me understand the school-wide perspective and how the pieces all fit together."

***Workload Distribution.*** While the majority of teachers (54%) reported that Council tasks created an additional burden on their workload, more than half of the faculty (62%) indicated that leadership roles were equitably distributed amongst Council members.

***Communication.*** Several teachers who responded to the open-ended questions indicated a concern about the continued lack of effective communication. Teachers identified the following factors as preventing effective communication, "The Council was too large, and certain members dominated the conversations"; "It was dominated by a few voices and norms

were not established very well.” The teacher presented this domination as having the potential to exclude some faculty, “I worry about those people (who) don’t have strong voices or aren’t willing to shout over others...Sometimes it is difficult to have quiet voices heard.” Similarly, others responded that, “Often large groups suppress honest dialogue”; “It can be very frustrating when there are several people who dominate the conversations, especially when there was not a clear agenda or leadership role.”

The findings suggest there may be a correlation between years at UPS and teachers’ perspectives regarding adherence to communication norms. Despite the staff training in communication norms, only 40% of the fourth year teachers reported that communication norms were adhered to during Council meetings. This implies that newer teachers to the school were not adhering to the norms.

### *Interview 2*

Following informal conversations that took place during the 2006 school year, two follow-up interviews were held; one with a continuing staff member and one with an exiting staff member. The continuing staff member was a founding staff member. She stated that the purpose of the Councils was vague and she wasn’t sure why we had implemented them. However, there was a benefit that arose from them, they were “...good for the articulation [between staff members].”

The exiting staff member had decided not to complete her contract beyond one year of service. She stated that UPS had a heavier workload than her previous school and that she was working 10 hours more a week. She also found that the multi-age program was challenging creating more work to plan effectively and cater for the broader range of skills and abilities within the classroom.

She stated, “I feel like I’ve learned a lot of things professionally and personally about myself. The situation forces you to reflect.” She added that at her previous school, “there wasn’t collaboration so we weren’t stretched or made to grow. Looking at everything in an evaluative manner is built into this system.” She also stated that at UPS, “professional development is up to the teachers themselves. The opportunity is there but you have to seek it out.”

### **Conclusion, Recommendations, and Implications**

The initial data collected through interviews at the onset of this study revealed teachers at University Preparation School at CSU Channel Islands (UPS) were dissatisfied because their job expectations were not being met, which included their individual needs for professional development. Teachers were expected to teach in multi-age classrooms. Some were expected to develop a dual language immersion program. There were expectations of all teachers for standards-based proficiency from all students. In addition to all of this, there was an overarching expectation of collaboration. An organizational structure for collaboration was in place, yet teachers were left to define collaboration and how the meetings should be implemented.

These initial findings led the researchers to implement a school structure known as Councils. The premise behind institutionalizing Councils was that providing more opportunity for collaboration would meet the needs of teachers thus addressing school-wide programmatic areas of concern. Surveys distributed to evaluate the Councils' impact had results that followed the same major themes identified in data from the first three data collection tools. The survey results are grouped following the same major themes identified from data gathered by the first three data collection tools: program and culture; workload distribution; communication; and professional development.

#### ***Program and Culture***

The program and culture of the school was still in the process of being developed during the time of this research. UPS was originally designed with a structure to facilitate a collaborative culture through Active Collaboration Team Time (ACTT). Scheduled for 50 minutes, four days a week, ACTT allowed for frequent grade level collaborations to take place. Although this structure was in place from the onset, there was a lack of a clear, school-wide



definition as to how the group collaboration time should be implemented. This lack of clarity (across the school) about purpose and procedure created an unstable environment.

Therefore, the culture of collaboration varied from group to group.

### ***Workload Distribution***

Councils provided teachers with further opportunities for cross grade level collaboration with a focus on school wide needs. One aim of Councils was to more evenly distribute the workload, as well as allowing for professional development opportunities and broaden collaborative opportunities. Councils provided an opportunity for shared leadership. The researchers were interested to discover if having all teachers participate in Councils would create an atmosphere of shared responsibility. Council work provided a forum for all teachers to have a voice in programmatic decision making that extended beyond the classroom. Cross grade level conversations provided an opportunity to broaden teachers' understanding of the programs and needs of the different grade levels.

### ***Communication***

An inherent component of collaboration is the communication process. As Ramsey (1999) points out, "...communication is too important to leave to chance...to be effective, it needs to be carefully planned, systematically managed, and continuously monitored and refined." (p172) When feedback gathered from the teachers indicated frustration with communication, the school attempted to address these needs by providing training in communication norms.

Following the implementation of Councils, surveys were administered to evaluate their overall effectiveness. Survey data collected in October 2005 resulted in positive feedback regarding communication. In data collected from later web-based surveys, half of the teachers reported that effective communication was now taking place. However, despite the training

teachers had experienced, some teachers indicated that the absence of meeting protocols led to a lack of focus during Council meetings and problems with collegiality. The lack of effective communication continued to hamper progress for some Councils.

Many teachers coming to UPS from more traditional programs had not experienced collaboration to the extent it occurred at UPS. Councils and grade level teams were left to define collaboration in their own terms, thus it varied from group to group. The results of the end of year survey indicated differences between fourth year teachers and those with fewer years in the school. The fourth year teachers gave more negative responses in regards to questions about communication and indicated greater concern about dominating personalities compared to teachers with fewer years at UPS.

The researchers found that communication between the administration and staff was a critical component in developing an effective collaborative model when implementing a PLC. The use of staff wide surveys allowed the researchers to identify both individual and group needs. Information gathered from a variety of instruments (the staff needs assessment activity, surveys and interviews) provided broad feedback and allowed the researchers to modify the program by implementing Councils. Constant communication allows for a responsive, fluid program as the needs of the staff and school continue to evolve. This suggests that training in effective communication, shared decision making and the building of teachers' leadership capacity needs to be an on-going process, particularly with a rotating staff.

### ***Professional Development***

Results from the web-based survey led the researchers to the realization that the structure of Councils alone did not meet the professional development needs and expectations of teachers.

Almost half of the teachers did not consider Council work as a means for personal professional growth.

Teachers came to UPS with different perceptions of professional development. Traditionally, professional development means inviting consultants to provide district-wide training of teachers or sending teachers to targeted workshops and institutes. This “one size fits all,” directive type of professional development training is common in most school districts and does not guarantee an impact on teachers’ practice or student learning. (Darling-Hammond, et. al., 1995)

At UPS, it is the daily, job-embedded challenges that come from the multiage classroom, dual language instruction, standards-based curriculum development, and opportunities for collaboration that provide the potential for professional growth. Research has shown that the most powerful staff development is tied directly to what the teacher is doing in the classroom. (DuFour, Eaker and DuFour, 2005)

However, such job-embedded challenges in themselves have not been reported as leading to professional growth. In order to maximize professional development opportunities, the researchers conclude that a shift in how teachers have traditionally perceived and defined professional development must occur. How teachers approach daily challenges, whether or not they are reflective in their practice, and the existence of an effective collaborative environment seems to determine whether or not there is a positive impact on professional growth.

The variety of responses in the surveys, group needs assessment and interviews demonstrated that areas identified for professional growth will vary between teachers. Other research in the field of professional development highlights how using classroom needs to guide

each teacher's professional growth goals makes the professional development job-embedded, personal and therefore, more effective. (DuFour, Eaker and DuFour, 2005)

Providing time for teachers to collaborate allows for immediate and on-going decision making, discussion and feedback. Allowing teachers to choose seminars and workshops based on their individual needs increases the possibility that the knowledge and skills acquired will be used in the classroom and, therefore, more likely to make an impact. It allows time for higher level processing, including reflection and analysis. It becomes an internal, rather than an external process.

### *Conclusion*

A few of the original needs and concerns identified at the onset of the research were resolved by implementing Councils. For example, the majority of teachers responded that cross-grade level articulation was beneficial. More than half also responded that meeting norms were adhered to during Council time and that leadership roles were shared equally.

However, some issues persisted. While more than half of the respondents indicated that Councils provided personal professional growth, there were teachers that did not recognize Councils as an avenue for their professional growth. Several teachers (46%) indicated that Council meetings were an infringement on their time and created an additional burden on their workload. Responses also indicated a need to improve the process of collaboration and many teachers indicated they did not know how to maximize the opportunities Councils provided. The number of teachers responding positively was not significant enough to conclude that Councils were an effective means of school-wide professional growth.

While the school had committed to an organizational structure to support collaboration time within the school schedule, the researchers found that simply placing teachers in a room

together did not mean that effective collaboration took place. Survey results demonstrated that teachers valued the opportunity for collaboration, yet ineffective communication and the lack of adherence to meeting protocols reduced the productivity benefits of meetings.

Additionally, new issues emerged. The findings revealed a notable difference in the responses of more veteran teachers to those of newer teachers. When compared, newer teachers responded more positively to survey questions than veteran teachers. The findings revealed a more negative perception of Councils from teachers that were in their fourth year at UPS. This data implies that the needs of more veteran staff members differ from those of new, incoming staff members and concurs with classic research regarding the stages of teacher development (Fuller and Brown, 1975). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that a change in the organizational structure alone did not completely resolve the identified issues and further changes were necessary.

### ***Recommendations***

The researchers recommend that UPS look critically at this research, then conduct an updated needs assessment and further investigate team dynamics to facilitate high quality, productive meetings. The administration should continue to invest in teachers' training in group facilitation. Further recommendations are to create Councils based specifically upon the school-wide needs assessment results and to allow teachers to choose which Council they are most interested in representing, rather than assigning teachers to Councils. Future possibilities include inviting CSUCI faculty, as experts in the field, to participate in Council work.

### ***Implications for Future Research***

The data represented in this research is limited in scope by several factors yet provides implications for further research.

Information gathered from the end of the year, web-based survey raised questions that merit further research for University Preparation School. Contrasting responses of veteran teachers to those in their induction year provide an opportunity to examine the stages of teacher development in a PDS. Continued perceptions of ineffective collaborative experiences warrant follow-up research on group dynamics and the enhancement of teachers' communication skills.

Information put forth in this study may be helpful to other schools that are attempting to implement a collaborative model of job-embedded professional development, as the findings could guide the design and development of collaborative structures.

Major themes that emerged as potentially beneficial for future research are as follows: the stages of teacher development at a PDS; how teachers' needs evolve over time and in relation to the developmental stage they are in; a study of team dynamics with an emphasis on communication and team development; continued study of PLC implementation and refinement; how a school's specific characteristics and culture impact the implementation and refinement of a PLC model; and finally, how teachers manage change in an environment of shared decision making.

Further research will not only assist University Preparation School in moving forward as it evolves as a professional development school, the findings will be useful for other professional development schools that share similar goals in the quest to staff their schools with high quality teachers and enhance job-embedded professional development through the collaborative environment of a professional learning community.

## Appendix A

### Professional Development Councils

#### Purpose:

The Professional Development Councils are designed as an internal structure to support a system of self governance and increase leadership capacity.

The PDC's will participate in the following types of activities:

- Identifying school-wide curriculum needs and goals
- Curriculum mapping
- Creating a common vision for the school community
- Planning parent education events
- Planning staff development days
- Planning workshops for training teachers
- Grant writing
- Research

#### Format:

All teachers will participate in one Curriculum Council, one Language Support Council, and one School Development Council. Each Council will have at least one representative from each phase of the school. (Early Years, Primary Years, Intermediate Years)

The Councils will meet on Thursday afternoons from 1:30-3:30.

- Curriculum Councils
  - Math
  - Reading/Language Arts
  - Science

- Social Studies
- Language Support Councils
  - Dual Language
  - Language Enrichment
- School Development Councils
  - Technology
  - Multi-age, Differentiation, Intervention
  - Assessment and accountability
  - School-community partnerships and Outreach
    - Peacebuilders, 40 Developmental Assets

Support Structure:

- Councils will have access to current journals and e-journals.
- Councils will receive regular updates on possible grant opportunities.
- Councils will have access to University faculty to support specific areas.

Accountability:

- The Councils will report back to their respective phases.
- They will keep a running history of goals, observable objectives, and accomplishments during the year.



## **Appendix B**

### Interview 1

These were seed questions, however, the interviews were open-ended and follow-up questions evolved according to the responses of the interviewees.

1. What is your view of the organizational hierarchy of this school?
2. What do you see as your function and role in the school's organization?
  - a. What do you feel is the fallout from this?
3. How do you feel decisions are made at this school?
4. How do you see relationships, people issues, and/or problems?
5. What caused changes in your perceptions between year one and year two?
6. Would you recommend this school to a teacher?
7. What would you like to see changed at UPS?
8. What are your thoughts about ACT time?
9. What were your expectations and/or misconceptions about working at UPS?

## Appendix C

### Professional Growth Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Band: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the following guiding questions to reflect on this year's goals, successes, and challenges.

1. What were your personal professional goals for this school year?
2. Did you meet these goal(s)? YES NO  
Why or why not?
3. What would you identify as your greatest area(s) of growth this school year?
  - a. What factors led to this growth?
4. How did your professional growth impact your classroom practices?
5. What were your biggest professional challenges this year?
  - a. What did you do to try and overcome these challenges?
  - b. What UPS support structures did or did not assist you in addressing these challenges.
6. How can UPS support you in overcoming these challenges next year? (coaching, workshops, materials, etc.)
7. What are your personal professional goals for next year?
8. What specialized knowledge do you have that could be shared with the staff?

**Appendix D**

Group Needs Assessment

As Created by UPS Teachers June of 2005

Needs	Priority Needs
<p>Student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further Peacebuilder Attitudes on Playground</li> <li>• After school sports program</li> <li>• School-wide musical production</li> <li>• Structured lunchtime activities</li> <li>• Motor-lab implementation</li> <li>• Administration support</li> <li>• Expand summer school programs</li> <li>• Refine and document curriculum</li> </ul>	<p>Student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time and Planning</li> <li>• Community and staff support</li> <li>• After school programs</li> </ul>
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan parent education nights</li> <li>• Grant with Amgen or others</li> <li>• Expanded community based mini-lessons</li> <li>• Rosters of parent interests and specific ways community members can participate</li> <li>• Sponsor work with other schools</li> <li>• Expand outreach to formalize establishment of professional development hub with other county school</li> <li>• Improve lunch program (more nutritional)</li> </ul>	<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tapping into parent resources</li> <li>• Spanish speaking parents more involved with PTA, TAPS, etc</li> <li>• Money</li> </ul>
<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spanish software to use</li> <li>• Refine and document curriculum being taught</li> <li>• Simplify math assessments</li> <li>• Refine instruction</li> <li>• Refine writers workshop</li> <li>• Benchmarks for math</li> <li>• More ongoing formal assessments with units</li> </ul>	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working on high level curriculum</li> <li>• Refine and simplify all areas</li> <li>• Better articulate math program</li> <li>• Benchmark for math</li> <li>• Address special ed needs</li> </ul>
<p>Professional Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue technology training</li> </ul>	<p>Professional Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff development for all pre-k teachers</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More involvement with CSUCI</li> <li>• Bringing in more of the business community to support the school</li> <li>• Special education</li> <li>• Peer teacher support, observation of other teachers</li> <li>• More shared leadership among the staff</li> <li>• Refine standards for pre-k</li> <li>• Workshops for pre-k to learn more about curriculum</li> <li>• Collaboration between specialists</li> <li>• Specialists going to professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for multi-age</li> <li>• Time/scheduling</li> <li>• Consistent cross grade level communication</li> <li>• Collaborative training: how to...conflict resolution, communication</li> <li>• Make sure all staff members can share opinions and feel “safe”</li> <li>• Money/grants</li> </ul>
<p>Mission Statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present at conferences</li> <li>• Presenters and assemblies in Spanish</li> <li>• More Spanish specialists</li> </ul>	<p>Mission Statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More support/guidance</li> <li>• Resources: research resources</li> <li>• Valuing acceptance/positive attitudes</li> <li>• Credentialed bilingual teachers</li> </ul>

**Appendix E**

Professional Council's Survey

October 13, 2005

In striving towards our goals as a professional development school we would like some input from you regarding the Professional Development Councils. You have now met with all three of your councils; Curriculum Council, School Development Council, and Language Council.

Briefly answer the following questions.

Did any or all of your councils use the agreed upon norms? If so was it effective?

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How was the council time used effectively?

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What was your overall feeling about the established format for councils?

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Do you have any suggestions?

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