Preservice teacher researchers investigated the effectiveness of a Professional Development School (PDS). They began by reviewing information about other PDSs, then conducted a literature review. Their evaluation involved teachers employed at a local PDS, teachers who had taught students at the PDS, undergraduates who had participated in field experiences at the PDS, district administrators associated with the PDS, and professors who had taught methods courses at the PDS. Five telephone and interview instruments were developed. Overall, most teachers felt that the school's administration supported the PDS partnership, and the university partner provided support. They felt strongly that teacher candidates from the PDS partnership were better prepared than they were prior to the partnership. While teachers believed that parent involvement had not increased as a result of the PDS, the other respondents believed there had been an increase. Program graduates all said that they would recommend the PDS to others. Undergraduates believed that the university methods classes had prepared them to meet diverse students' needs, and they were excited to be part of a PDS. Professors stated that the greatest challenges to success were finances and personnel changes. Administrators praised the concept of the PDS and the school-university working relationship. (Contains 10 references.) (SM)
A Professional Development School Program Evaluation

Naomi C. Coyle, Gerald Bagley, Kim Derrick, Yolanda Jackson, Brenda Mc Donald, Belena Turner and Sonia Williford
A Professional Development School Program Evaluation

Naomi C. Coyle, Gerald Bagley, Kim Derrick, Yolanda Jackson, Brenda McDonald, Belena Turner, and Sonia Williford

How do you determine if a Professional Development School (PDS) is really making a difference? If it is really making a difference, who is receiving the benefits? What are some areas of strengths and weaknesses of the program? Those were the questions that I posed to my students in my Education 568 class, Program Evaluation. Evidence both descriptive and qualitative was to be collected that would provide the answers to my questions.

The students began by reviewing information about other PDSs. This data were collected through schools' websites that are found on AACTE's database and using a random search of the World Wide Web. The schools selected are located in 7 different states. A second source that was employed to determine the level of the school's effectiveness was the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The third source of information was the limited amount of research that is available.

Review of Literature

The traditional review of literature consisted of reading the articles and books written by Abdal-Haqq (1995, 1998), Chance (2000), Teitel & Abdal-Haqq (2000), and Hoffman (1997). The information in the book Professional Development Schools: Weighing the Evidence by Abdal-Haqq was one of the primary sources for the research that the students conducted.

The mission continued with the students spending time collecting data from the Internet about PDSs. Abdal-Haqq (1997) bibliography and resource list provided data for this venture. They were surprised at the different types of PDSs. However, this affirmed what authors of related literature had stated. There is no clear definition for a PDS. They searched the information to find patterns of similarity among the schools. They found that the PDSs had similar purposes which included providing a unique setting for the education of students and preparation of new teachers, developing innovative teaching practices, providing professional development to all participants, and providing the opportunity to conduct research, field tests, and disseminate the educational innovations. Many of the PDSs had on-site coordinators who organize instructional activities, hold regular conferences with preservice teachers, and collaborate with mentors, principals, and district personnel. The principals of the PDSs have extra duties. For example, they must assist in selecting mentors and assist the coordinator in clarifying the expectations of the PDS. The PDSs also have many hours of professional development opportunities that accommodate the needs of the teachers, preservice teachers, and the students. Most schools have a school leadership team that is composed of parents, teachers, and administrators. They meet on a regular basis to collaborate on targeted educational issues. They also found that PDSs must have financial support. Some are funded by grants while others are supported by the partnering of the university and school district.
Another source of data was the NCATE Standards (http://www.ncate.org/standard/m_stds.htm) for PDSs. The standards include:

1. The Learning Community
2. Accountability and Quality Assurance
3. Collaboration
4. Diversity and Equity
5. Structures, Resources, and Roles

The Learning Community Standard states that a PDS should be learning-centered and support integrated learning and development for students and candidates. The partners are members of the school and the teacher education program who have agreed to collaborate. The second standard, Accountability and Quality Assurance, holds partners accountable to themselves and the public for upholding professional standards of teaching and learning. The next standard, Collaboration, outlines the manner in which partners must work together to implement the PDS mission and achieve a successful program. Standard Four, Diversity and Equity, requires that the partners initiate policies and practices that are equitable to all students and candidates. The last standard, Structures, Resources, and Roles, requires partners to combine their resources to reach their goals and establish governing structures that support the learning and development of students, candidates, faculty, staff, professors, and other professionals.

Methodology
The class decided to include in this program evaluation a) the teachers who are employed at a local PDS, b) teachers who had completed their student teaching at the same PDS, c) undergraduates who had participated field experience at that PDS, d) district administrators associated with the PDS, and e) professors who had taught methods courses at the PDS. The local PDS and university supplied the names and phone numbers of each of these people. After determining the population of the study, the class developed five instruments to be used to collect data. Three of the instruments were to be used in telephone surveys and the others with interviews. Information from books written by Brainard (1996), Tuckman (1985), and Weiss (1998) was used as guides for the development of the instruments. A random selection of the teachers who taught at the PDS, teachers who had completed their student teaching at the PDS, and undergraduates were surveyed. A Likert scale was used with the following ratings: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. During the survey, the participant was asked to elaborate any items. Professors and administrators were questioned using a structured interview. The participants were told that their names would be disclosed.

Analysis of the Results
Descriptive data were obtained using the mean as a central tendency and percentages used to indicate proportionate results for each survey item. Three surveys were administered. On the Teacher Survey, the majority of the teachers responded strongly agree that the administration of Stoner Hill supports the PDS partnership (87%), and that they received support from the university that is their partner (60%). Fifty percent responded that they agree that the professional development required for teachers employed at a PDS has been meaningful in terms of teaching and learning for the students. Only 11 percent strongly agreed that instructional time is wasted when the
college students are presenting lessons. Fifty-seven percent disagreed that parental involvement at Stoner Hill had increased since the implementation of the PDS. All the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that teacher candidates under the PDS partnership are better prepared than they were prior to the partnership.

The Graduate Survey revealed that the administration interacted well with the administration. Also they stated that they agreed that the teachers cooperated with the faculty liaison from the university. All strongly agreed that they had become sensitive to ethnic and cultural differences among students as a result of having participated in the PDS. The graduates had the most difficulty responding to the fourth item on the survey. This item stated that as a student teacher there was an environment that promoted a positive educational, working relationship with my cooperating teacher. The graduates stated that the reason they could not answer the question was that one cooperating teacher was wonderful and the classroom environment promoted a positive educational relationship, but that the other was not as positive. She said that at the PDS the student teachers work with two cooperating teachers during the semester. One of the cooperating teachers teaches upper elementary and the other lower. This gives the student teacher an opportunity to gain broader field experience. When the graduates were asked if they would recommend the teaching education program to others, 100% responded agree.

Item One on the Undergraduate Survey asked if the students believed that methods classes taught through university had prepared them to meet the diverse needs of the student that they will be teaching. All the students responded either agree or strongly agree. When asked if educational research was used to justify what was taught in the methods classes, the students responded either agree or strongly agree. All the respondents stated that they believed that constructive criticism was used when the teachers evaluated their teaching. Item four dealt with how the students felt they were being treated at the PDS, and everyone said that they were treated with respect. All the students stated that they were excited to be a part of the PDS. The item that addressed modeling the teaching performance of the teachers who they were assigned caused the students the most challenge. All the students expressed some reservations about this item. They indicated that some of the teachers that they worked with would not be teachers that they would model, but the majority of the faculty excelled and would be teachers that they would model. The students expressed that they believed that the college liaison collaborated with the students concerning their teaching performance.

The Professor Interview consisted of 6 questions. The first question dealt with the involvement of the administration and faculty members being involved in determining what was taught in methods courses at the university. The professors stated that the state department of education dictates what will be taught. However, the professors determine how it will be taught. The greatest challenge during the first year of implementation during the first year of the PDS implementation was identified as scheduling the student teachers and methods students in the PDS teachers’ classrooms. Two major roadblocks for the success of the PDS were discussed. The greatest challenge pinpointed was financial; the second was a change in personnel. When asked what programs had been developed for the creation of collaborative learning communities at the PDS, the professors explained that the actual field experience for student teachers had changed. Prior to the PDS implementation, the students were not in one location. Most of the students went to schools that had few minority students and a plethora of parental
involvement. Another area that was identified was the emphasis that had been placed on getting parents involved. One professor talked about the first PTA meeting that she had attended, and there were more PDS faculty present than parents. She said that things had changed and that the parents are now attending the PTA meetings. The evidence of collaborative inquiry given by the professors was a survey that was conducted right after the PDS was implemented. The results of the survey showed that the teachers believed that the principal should be replaced because he was not effective. The principal was presented with the survey and then resigned. One of the professors served on the committee that hired the present principal. The new principal believes in teacher empowerment.

The administrators were asked what they expected from the PDS partnership. They responded that ultimately they expect academic excellence for both the PDS and the college students. When asked if they feel that there has been collaboration between the PDS and the university, they responded that even the superintendent of the school system and the vice-president of the college have been actively involved. They were asked what they do differently because the school is a PDS. They responded the total number of in-service hours and the focus of those hours. The teachers spent an entire week of their summer vacation in a Supervision of Student Teaching course. Plus they spent numerous hours in after school and Saturday workshops dealing with teaching strategies. The last question was open ended and the respondent was asked if they had anything that they would like to add. The administrators praised the concept of the PDS and the working relationship between the school and university.

**Report Summary**

There were two areas that surfaced as a result of this evaluation. First, the faculty, administrators, and professors have different views about parental involvement at the PDS. The teachers indicated that parental involvement had not increased while the other participants stated that there had been an increase. A second issue is the effective versus ineffective teaching experiences in which university students participate.

**Recommendations**

Based upon the results, five recommendations were made by the evaluation team. First, the faculty, administrators, and professors should collaborate about the discrepancy in their beliefs about parental involvement and develop an action plan for improvement. A suggestion was that a person be hired to help coordinate the efforts to get the parents involved. Second, the student teachers should be more involved with the selection of cooperating teachers. The student teacher should be allowed to select three cooperating teachers, and the college liaison would be responsible for the final selection. Third, the school should have an on-site PDS Coordinator whose duties concentrate solely on the PDS partnership. This would assist not only the PDS but also the university students. Another recommendation was to pay the teachers a stipend of $25.00 per methods student up to a maximum of $200 or provide a reduction in tuition for graduate courses. The fifth recommendation was that a steering committee consisting of parents, teachers, administrators, and professors should be created to make recommendations concerning the PDS partnership.
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Printed Name/Position/Title: Naomi C. Coyle, professor, Dr.

Organization/Address: Centenary College of LA
3911 Centenary Blvd.
Shreveport, LA 71134

Telephone:  Fax:  E-mail Address:  Date:  

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Signature: [Signature]

Printed Name/Position/Title: Gerald W. Badeky

Organization/Address: 2901 Pennsylvania Av. Shreveport, La. 71104

Telephone: 318-445-7218

Fax: [Fax]

E-mail Address: geard.badeky@ste.net

Date: 9/1/02

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**Signature:** Kim A. Derrick

**Printed Name/Position/Title:** Kim A. Derrick

**Organization/Address:** Centenary College of LA
2911 Centenary Blvd.
Shreveport, LA 71134

**Telephone:** 318-688-5659

**Fax:**

**E-mail Address:** KADERRICK@ac1.com

**Date:**

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Signature: Yolanda D. Jackson
Printed Name/Position/Title: Teacher
Organization/Address: Centenary College of LA 2911 Centenary Blvd. Shreveport, LA 71134
Telephone: 318-549-5148
E-mail Address: action18@msn.com
Fax: 9/16/02

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Signature: Brenda McDonald
Printed Name/Position/Title: Brenda McDonald/Instructional Coordinator

Organization/Address: Centenary College of LA
2911 Centenary Blvd.
Shreveport, LA 71134

Telephone: (318) 924-7310
Fax: (318) 246-4554
E-mail Address: Kenandbrenmc@aol.com
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Signature: Belena Turner

Printed Name/Position/Title: Belena Turner

Organization/Address: Centenary College of Louisiana
2411 Centenary Blvd.
Shreveport, LA 71134

Telephone: (318) 686-6710

Fax:

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