

*Professionalization,
Partnership,
and Power*

Building Professional
Development Schools

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Chapter Six

*Why Do Schools Cooperate with
University-Based Reforms?*

THE CASE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

Educational reform has proven to be “steady work” in the words of Elmore and McLaughlin, because it has been so routinely unsuccessful in bringing about significant change within schools. As they put it,

Reforms that deal with the fundamental stuff of education—teaching and learning—seem to have weak, transitory, and ephemeral effects; while those that expand, solidify, and entrench school bureaucracy seem to have strong, enduring, and concrete effects (Elmore and McLaughlin, 1988, p. v).

This is the core insight one can distill from the dismal literature about American reform efforts: that schools have shown an amazing capacity for accommodating their organizational form to the latest reform initiative while refusing to adopt its substance. According to Cusick (1992), the formal organization of schooling responds to such initiatives using standard techniques of specialization, moderation, and cooptation, which “combine to turn educational reform into organizational reform” (p. 211). And such a transformation of the original thrust of the reform effort can, in turn, appropriately be interpreted as a failure—what Sarason (1990) called, in the title of his recent book, *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform*. School reformers fail so predictably, in Sarason’s view, in large part because of their chronic inability to tailor reforms to a particular educational context. The message seems to be that unless you understand the unique structure of relationships that defines a par-

particular school and community, you will never be able to bring about substantive reform in school practices. If reformers in general have a problem of being cut off from context, the difficulty is particularly acute when they hail from the university. School reforms that draw upon the personnel and perspectives of the university, as so many do, run into predictable problems of implementation because of the gap separating the universalistic concerns of university people from the particularistic concerns of school people. Education professors and educational researchers are removed from the necessity of responding to the daily barrage of practical problems that confront practitioners in schools, and at the same time they are constrained by academic career incentives that put a premium on making contributions to the theoretical literature. As a result, they can and must look on schools as sources of data for the construction of general theories about teaching, learning, and the functions of schooling. Meanwhile, teachers and administrators, who cannot escape the practical demands of running classrooms and schools, tend to look on each classroom and each school as a unique site for educational practice that is inextricably embedded in local issues and relationships. Therefore, whereas university people see reform as an effort to apply general principles in schools, school people see such reforms as simply inapplicable to their own problems of practice or as usable only if radically adapted to fit the local setting.

Given these differences, the remarkable thing is not why schools resist university-sponsored reforms but why they ever agree to participate in such reform initiatives in the first place. Yet they continue to do so. Educators still call on university professors and draw on educational research when they consider making changes within schools; they still are willing to sign on, albeit cautiously, to reform efforts supported by the university. Why is this so? What benefits do K-12 educators feel they may gain from such association with higher education? It is these questions that I will explore in this chapter. I will attempt to sketch some of the reasons that motivate administrators and teachers to pursue reform of existing practice within schools and classrooms in cooperation with university faculty and in line with university research. In exploring these reasons I will draw on the example of one current educational reform movement that has emerged recently from the university, the effort by the Holmes Group to professionalize teaching and restructure the school. First, let me provide a little background about this particular reform effort, and then I will turn to the question of why schools might be willing to go along with it, and other university-based reform efforts, at least for awhile.

The Holmes Group is an organization of about 100 colleges of education in research-oriented universities in the United States. It has defined its goals in two reports, *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986) and *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990). (A third report, tentatively titled *Tomorrow's Schools of Education*, is being released this year.) Arguing that educational research has now developed a

solid knowledge base for teaching, the teaching should be elevated into a full-fledged profession. One of the goals of the teaching would be an increase in status. The advantage to students would be an increase in the quality of instruction. These reports lay out a two-stage professionalization process—asking colleges and universities to increase the breadth and depth of professional education for school teachers and to give schools a more prominent and influential role in regulating school operations. The effort is operationalized as the current effort by the Holmes Group, what are called professional development schools. In *Tomorrow's Schools*, a PDS is intended to be a partnership between university faculty members and the teachers in a school for the purpose of rethinking and reforming school practice.

In this chapter, I will be using the example of the Holmes Group as a part of the larger problem of school cooperation with the university. The efforts of the Holmes Group initiative is made up entirely of university people; it emerged from its own ranks and not from the ranks of school people. The idea for PDSs also developed initially from the ranks of the Holmes Group institutions have been tried in a number of schools. The question, then, is: Why have some schools

ADMINISTRATORS AND UNIVERSITY

There are at least two reasons why schools cooperate with the university. It is useful for them to draw on ideas and personnel from the university to sign on to a university reform effort. The university has leverage in dealing with the public, and it has leverage in dealing with teachers.

Deflecting Public Control

School administrators feel intensely that public education in America is comfortable criticizing schools because public education is the most visible and most thoroughly open to public view and influence. Schools are intensely local, and as such they are deeply embedded and thoroughly integrated in their lives. Schools play a central role in the social, cultural, and intellectual life of the community during their formative

solid knowledge base for teaching, the Holmes Group reports propose that teaching should be elevated into a full-fledged profession. The advantage to teachers would be an increase in status, rewards, and autonomy, while the advantage to students would be an increase in the quality and competence of instruction. These reports lay out a two-part plan for carrying out the professionalization process—asking colleges of education to increase the breadth and depth of professional education for teachers and simultaneously asking schools to restructure themselves in order to give teachers a more autonomous and influential role in regulating school practices. The latter aim has become operationalized as the current effort by Holmes Group institutions to create what are called professional development schools (PDSs). As spelled out in *Tomorrow's Schools*, a PDS is intended to be a collaborative project between university faculty members and the teachers and administrators in a particular school for the purpose of rethinking and redesigning the way schools work.

In this chapter, I will be using the effort to create PDSs as a case in point of the larger problem of school cooperation with university-based reform efforts. The Holmes Group initiative is certainly such an effort: the group is made up entirely of university people; its call for teacher professionalization emerged from its own ranks and not from teachers or schools; in like manner, the idea for PDSs also developed initially within the university; and now the Holmes Group institutions have been trying to sell this idea to schools. My question, then, is: Why have some schools been willing to buy?

ADMINISTRATORS AND UNIVERSITY-BASED REFORM

There are at least two reasons why school administrators may feel that it is useful for them to draw on ideas and personnel from the university and even to sign on to a university reform effort. Such a strategy may give them some leverage in dealing with the public, and it may also give them some leverage in dealing with teachers.

Deflecting Public Control

School administrators feel intensely vulnerable to public pressure. Most Americans are comfortable criticizing schools and second-guessing educators, because public education is the most public of all American institutions. Unlike the economy, family, and even perhaps government, public schools are thoroughly open to public view and influence. One reason for this is that they are intensely local, and as such they are both accessible to ordinary citizens and thoroughly integrated in their lives. After all, public schools play a central role in the social, cultural, and intellectual development of most members of the community during their formative years. In their youth, local citizens

spend a total of about 15,000 hours in these classrooms, and after graduation the affiliation continues. Schools sit prominently in the middle of every neighborhood, acting as community centers and civic symbols. Adult members of the community go there to vote, to attend public meetings, to see a play, and to learn CPR.

A lifetime of close association with the schools means that what schools do is quite visible and understandable to the public. This point is underscored by the fact that schools are governed by boards of ordinary citizens, not professional educators. School board meetings are places where individuals feel free to come and speak their minds and where administrators have to sit and listen. Superintendents and principals, in particular, as the front-line representatives of the school system, must become accustomed to receiving unsolicited advice and criticism from the general public and doing so with reasonably good grace. These administrators need to keep the public happy. If they fail to do so, citizens reassert their right to reject major actions by the administration with every vote of the school board, every millage election, and every bond issue campaign. As a result, schools are remarkably sensitive to local expressions of concern about how they carry out their functions, or at least they need to appear that way.

This sensitivity is one of the engines driving the continuing waves of reform in American education. Administrators need to deflect public discontent by showing that they are doing something about whatever problem the public sees as currently afflicting the local school, so they subject schools and school systems to one reform effort after another in order to demonstrate their willingness to make necessary changes. Drawing on the authority and expertise of the university can be quite helpful in this effort to deflect criticism. Whether administrators ground their actions in research findings or forge a direct alliance with university faculty, the university connection gives them a powerful political tool. It allows them to tell the public that their reform efforts are not merely examples of political pandering but that these efforts constitute *authoritative* remedial action.

Past failures by local officials, and their identification with an institution as familiar and understandable as public education, may well undermine their credibility with the public as agents of change for schools. But the university retains a distance and prestige that the school administration does not, and it has a reputation for generating expert knowledge that is both obscure to the average layperson and apparently imbued with special authority. Therefore, tapping into the social and intellectual resources of the university can invest actions by local officials with a degree of both authority and mystery that would otherwise be lacking. These qualities serve both to reassure the public that something serious is being done and to block further public inquiry, since the measures taken are beyond the ken of ordinary citizens. Rowan (1984)

labeled this use of educational research as a "the stylized knowledge we call 'science' fur. When local officials invoke this power in su is frequently a kind of "healing ritual" (p. 7) sense of educational well-being and its confi.

One consequence of particular bene appeal to the shamans of the university he schools that may otherwise be all too clear t way, when the kind of expert knowledge e and embodied in the university researcher is it serves to transform a touchy *political* prof ageable *technical* problem. This transforma from future interference by the laity. After amenable to solution through the applica widely held, but instead a solution calls for only possessed by a few experts—who a side. Instead of having voters make educat administration can assert, we need to hav based on science.

In light of these kinds of considerati find that allying themselves with the Holm teachers is a potentially useful way to all local schools and protect themselves agair munity. The first Holmes report spelled o ment is firmly grounded in the science of at the university (Labaree, in press). Led t oriented colleges of education, the moven link themselves to the full authority of th agreeing to collaborate with the universit development school within their district. statement to the public about the technic on the problems in the local schools and forms of incremental remediation. They ingness and ability to build one of "to community, based on the latest in educa high priests themselves.

Promoting the Control of Teachers

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labeled this use of educational research as a form of "shamanism" in which "the stylized knowledge we call 'science' functions much like magic" (p. 78). When local officials invoke this power in support of reform efforts, the result is frequently a kind of "healing ritual" (p. 79), that restores the community's sense of educational well-being and its confidence in the officials.

One consequence of particular benefit to administrators is that their appeal to the shamans of the university helps to mystify a situation in the schools that may otherwise be all too clear to the average citizen. Put another way, when the kind of expert knowledge embedded in educational research and embodied in the university researcher is applied to a local school concern, it serves to transform a touchy *political* problem into an administratively manageable *technical* problem. This transformation helps to buffer administrators from future interference by the laity. After all, now the problem is no longer amenable to solution through the application of political skills, which are widely held, but instead a solution calls for the kind of technical skills that are only possessed by a few experts—who are already on the administration's side. Instead of having voters make educational decisions based on values, the administration can assert, we need to have specialists make these decisions based on science.

In light of these kinds of considerations, school administrators may well find that allying themselves with the Holmes Group's effort to professionalize teachers is a potentially useful way to allay public fears about the quality of local schools and protect themselves against political intrusions from the community. The first Holmes report spelled out that the professionalization movement is firmly grounded in the science of teaching as developed by the experts at the university (Labaree, in press). Led by the most prestigious and research-oriented colleges of education, the movement offers administrators a chance to link themselves to the full authority of the university and of science itself. By agreeing to collaborate with the university in the construction of a professional development school within their district, administrators can make a dramatic statement to the public about the technical wizardry they are bringing to bear on the problems in the local schools and their willingness to go beyond minor forms of incremental remediation. They are vividly demonstrating their willingness and ability to build one of "tomorrow's schools" right in their own community, based on the latest in educational technology and overseen by the high priests themselves.

Promoting the Control of Teachers

University-based reform can be useful to administrators not only because it helps them blunt efforts by the public to control schools but also because it helps them sharpen their own efforts to control teaching. As Lortie (1975) and others (Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976) have pointed out, school

administrators have considerable power in dealing with the noninstructional realm of schooling but have remarkably little ability to shape the way teachers teach. In part, this is the result of the difficulty administrators have in acquiring direct knowledge on how instruction is being carried out. The way schools are spatially organized, instruction goes on in relative privacy behind the doors of the self-contained classroom. The problem is also the result of the weak mechanisms available to administrators for the control of teacher behavior. Standard forms of reward and punishment used by supervisors in other organizations to regulate how employees do their jobs—the promise of pay increases for the compliant and the threat of firing for the noncompliant—are simply unavailable to the school administrator, who is bound by union contracts and tenure rules. Thus, administrators often do not know how well a teacher is teaching and cannot do much about it even if they have this information. The result is that administrators often experience chronic frustration, feeling that they are being held accountable by the public for carrying out the competent instruction of students when they do not have the direct power required to fulfill this expectation. Curriculum mandates, standardized testing, and merit pay plans are all methods they have used to gain some control over teachers and teaching, but these methods have not been very successful. One key reason for the relative ineffectiveness of such methods is that they are often seen by teachers, quite accurately, as efforts to reduce teacher autonomy and therefore lead to various forms of active and passive resistance, such as when a merit pay proposal meets union opposition or when a new curriculum package ends up in the teacher's desk drawer.

However, drawing on the expertise and authority of the university in support of a local effort to reform instruction offers administrators the possibility of augmenting their own modest powers in this area. This approach allows the administration to present the proposed reform as something other than a bald effort to gain top-down control over the classroom. By grounding the reform in educational research and drawing on university personnel to help in its implementation, school administrators help to establish the idea that this reform is a simple application of the latest and best ideas about effective pedagogical practice rather than another example of bureaucratic intrusion in the classroom. The administrator takes the role of facilitator in this scenario, in which reform is presented as an effort to aid the teacher in carrying out what "research says" are the most effective means of accomplishing the teacher's own educational goals.

The advantages of the university's involvement for school administrators come not only from its authority and its expertise but also from its image as a disinterested party. Since university people are not part of the school system's power structure, they can make suggestions (directly as consultants and indirectly through their research findings) without appearing to take sides in

the local power struggle over the control of schooling. Teachers are often willing to take advice from this neutral party if backed only by the bureaucratic principal. However, the effectiveness of this approach in this regard depends on its credibility about teaching and schools and also on the politics of a particular school or school system.

The teacher professionalization movement concerns quite nicely. It focuses on teacher quality and the need to upgrade it, so in the name of supporting teacher autonomy there is ever going to be a reform effort. Outside guidance in rethinking their own practice. After all, the Holmes Group is offering teachers themselves (what occupational status is this?) and to involve the university in allaying suspicions about another actor's involvement with a very attractive opportunity for the construction of a school dedicated to teacher development. Administrators, this potential for enlistment creates the opportunity to tear down the current instructional control and to institute new norms of teaching practice and establish new norms—all under the banner of professionalization.

Of course, teachers and administrators are not the only reformer (and the PDS proponent) two sides of the same coin. Knowledge going to be in resolving our interests are you really serving in your community, the administration, or the teacher. But first let us examine some reasons for the value in the university perspective on involvement in local reform efforts.

TEACHERS AND UNIVERSITY

There are at least two reasons why teachers are willing to draw on ideas and personnel from the university to become involved with a university reform effort. First, they get some leverage in dealing with the principal. Also, they also give them a useful perspective in this

the local power struggle over the control of the classroom. Teachers might be willing to take advice from this neutral corner that would be greeted with suspicion if backed only by the bureaucratic authority of the superintendent or principal. However the effectiveness of the university's involvement in reform in this regard depends on its credibility—both as a source of useful knowledge about teaching and schools and also as a neutral party in the organizational politics of a particular school or school system.

The teacher professionalization movement fits these kinds of administrator concerns quite nicely. It focuses attention directly on the problem of teacher quality and the need to upgrade the way that teachers teach, yet it does so in the name of supporting teacher autonomy and improving teacher status. If there is ever going to be a reform effort that can convince teachers to accept outside guidance in rethinking their own methods of teaching, this may be it. After all, the Holmes Group is offering to do its magic for the benefit of the teachers themselves (what occupational group does not want to be considered professional?) and to involve the university directly in the process (thus helping to allay suspicions about another administrative gambit). It presents teachers with a very attractive opportunity to become deeply involved in the construction of a school dedicated to professional development. But for administrators, this potential for enlisting teacher involvement in PDS development creates the opportunity to tear down the walls protecting teachers from instructional control and to institute a new system that defines acceptable norms of teaching practice and establishes mechanisms for enforcing these norms—all under the banner of professionalism.

Of course, teachers and administrators both may well ask the university reformer (and the PDS proponent) two key questions: How helpful is your knowledge going to be in resolving our educational problems? And whose interests are you really serving in your intervention in the schools—the community, the administration, or the teachers? These are issues I will take up later. But first let us examine some reasons that teachers might have for finding value in the university perspective on schools and for welcoming university involvement in local reform efforts.

TEACHERS AND UNIVERSITY-BASED REFORM

There are at least two reasons why teachers may feel that it is useful for them to draw on ideas and personnel from the university and perhaps to become involved with a university reform effort. Such a strategy may give them some leverage in dealing with the educational bureaucracy, and it may also give them a useful perspective in thinking about their own practice.

Deflecting Administrative Control

Whereas administrators may think of research and researchers as mechanisms for gaining control of classroom instruction, teachers may see them as mechanisms for deflecting such control efforts. One of the problems facing teachers is that they are trapped within the school's micropolitical structure, where the administrative bureaucracy claims a monopoly over the definition of appropriate curriculum and good teaching. They enjoy instructional autonomy, but this is accidental rather than intentional. The administration has difficulty knowing about and influencing their teaching, but that does not mean that teachers are recognized as having the right to teach as they wish. Far from it. The superintendent is still charged by the public with the responsibility for governing instruction within the schools. He or she has the right, if not the means, to establish what teachers teach and how they do it. Thus teacher autonomy lacks public legitimacy, and teachers find that their only structural link to both the political and curricular base of public education runs up against the school system's hierarchy. Through the production of curriculum guidelines, the control of curriculum materials, and the generation of staff development programs, the administration asserts (formally, at least) its organizational ascendancy over teachers.

Goodson and his colleagues argue that teachers, trapped within the micropolitics of the school, may reach out to researchers from the university as an alternative source for legitimate ideas and views about teaching and schooling (Goodson & Mangan, 1991; Fliesser, 1991). Since university professors are not beholden to the educational bureaucracy and are invested with their own legitimate claim to knowledge about schools, teachers may find association with them potentially valuable. This relationship may not only give teachers access to ideas that are different from the official administrative position, but it may also give them independent and authoritative allies who could help advance their educational concerns within the school system. Thus, affiliation with university personnel and reform efforts may help teachers offset and even deflect administrative control over teaching.

The creation of a professional development school is a situation that appears to offer precisely these kinds of benefits to participating teachers. The Holmes Group's rhetoric about PDSs represented them as an effort to restructure the power relationships within the school and in the process create new and legitimate ways for teachers to take part in curriculum formation, instructional supervision, and school governance. If realized, this would mean a significant improvement over the limited and negative autonomy of the average teacher—who is "administratively subordinate but instructionally autonomous, disempowered within the school and school system but all-powerful in the classroom" (Labaree, 1988, p. 133). Reinforcing the attractiveness of this possibility for teachers is the promise of establishing long-term collaborative

relationships with professors, who to buttress the position of teachers.

Promoting Reflective Practice

Not only can university research relationship between teachers and an important role in helping teacher practice. The theoretical and decontextualized nature of research can make this research useful for teachers in the context of teaching and schools that is not always consistent with the demands of daily practice. Research can examine which elements in their practice are ones they have in common with research. Research gives them a general picture of the particulars of their own practice and helps them to require a good sense of both a relationship between the two. In a recent paper (Labaree, 1991), I examine the experience as a teacher moving back and forth between the school and the university). His testimony suggests that contact with research can be a benefit that contact with research can be reflective about one's own teaching.

The PDS initiative would seek to help teachers to engage in close collaboration with university professors to gain an invaluable perspective on their practice. Professors and teachers work in teams to set goals and then jointly try to put these goals into practice. It is hard to understand why many teachers do not do this personally and professionally gratifyingly.

PROBLEMS POSED BY RESEARCH BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

The preceding account suggests some of the problems that confront school people when they draw on university research to support local efforts at reform. One is determining the credibility of the research. When university research findings are used to support local work and what is the effect of this research? The other is a problem of determining who benefits from this research: Who benefits when the university is involved in school reform?

relationships with professors, whose continuing role within the PDS promises to buttress the position of teachers relative to the administration.

Promoting Reflective Practice

Not only can university researchers intervene providentially in the relationship between teachers and administrators, but they can also play an important role in helping teachers to reflect on their own instructional practice. The theoretical and decontextualized character of educational research can make this research useful for teachers, since it gives them access to a view of teaching and schools that is not wholly bound up in their immediate context and the demands of daily practice in that setting. This allows teachers to examine which elements in their classrooms are situationally unique and which are ones they have in common with other teachers in other places. Research gives them a general picture of teaching that they can compare with the particulars of their own practical setting. Reflective practice would seem to require a good sense of both and an ability to move back and forth easily between the two. In a recent paper, Fliesser (1991) describes his own experience as a teacher moving back and forth "between two worlds" (the school and the university). His testimony provides powerful witness to the potential benefit that contact with research and researchers can have on one's perspective about one's own teaching.

The PDS initiative would seem to provide extensive opportunities for teachers to engage in close collaborative contact with researchers and thereby gain an invaluable perspective on their own teaching. In PDSs now under way, professors and teachers work in teams to develop curricular and pedagogical goals and then jointly try to put these goals into practice in their school. It is not hard to understand why many teachers might find this kind of involvement personally and professionally gratifying.

PROBLEMS POSED BY COLLABORATION
BETWEEN SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY

The preceding account suggests two kinds of problems that may confront school people when they draw on the knowledge and personnel of the university to support local efforts at educational reform. One is a problem of determining the credibility of the university as a useful ground for reform: When university research findings are applied in schools, how well do they work and what is the effect of this result on the reputation of the researchers? The other is a problem of determining the interests served by this collaboration: Who benefits when the university becomes directly or indirectly involved in school reform?

Credibility of the Researcher

The core of the credibility problem facing the researcher turned reformer is the basic incompatibility between the theoretical aims of educational researchers and the practical needs of school practitioners. Buchmann (1984) puts the issue this way:

Scientific authority is based on competence in inquiry, which means seeking and asking, not answering and prescribing. The tentativeness of [research] knowledge is like a safety catch that a pretension to usefulness tends to remove. This is so, in particular, because the public accepts scientific findings not because it shares the scientific conception of reality but because of the social authority of science. Scientific knowledge and judgment are opaque and indisputable to most people (p. 431).

Researchers seek to establish general relationships between variables, and this quest presses them to abstract from particular contexts and remove extraneous variables for the sake of conceptual clarity and methodological precision. However, practitioners must deal daily with the distinctive features of their own context and the complex mixture of issues that shape what goes on there.

The result is a mismatch between precision and utility, which makes it impossible to effect any sort of simple application of research findings in a practical setting (Cohen & Garet, 1975; Lindblom & Cohen, 1979). In fact, attempts at "[i]mproving applied research ha[ve] produced paradoxical results: knowledge which is better by any scientific standard, no more authoritative by any political standard and often more mystifying by any reasonable public standard" (Cohen & Garet, 1975, p. 33). The consequence of this mismatch between researchers and school people is what Slavin (1989) called the "pendulum" swing of reform fads in schools—characterized by "early enthusiasm, widespread dissemination, subsequent disappointment, and eventual decline" (p. 752). Early research results are translated into school reforms (the example he uses is Hunter's "Instructional Theory into Practice" program) that then run into two kinds of credibility difficulties.

First, the effort to translate theory into practice leads to predictable implementation problems in schools because of the complexities and peculiarities of each practice setting. So practitioners begin to question the usefulness and applicability of this theory. And second, further research, employing refined variables and more arcane methodology, leads to a predictable narrowing and qualification of the claims made from the research. So researchers also begin to question the scientific validity of the reform's assumptions. In short, over time, the credibility of research-based reformers tends to come under increasing fire from both practitioners and researchers, who grow to doubt both the reform's practical usefulness and its theoretical validity. Thus the

ability of academic shamanism to bring a tem's ailments collapses as soon as voice to suggest that the shaman is wearing no

The Holmes Group effort to profit in the middle of its own credibility dilemma. firmly in the scientific research on teaching using what Buchmann calls "the social credibility and feasibility of its proposals" education that are members of the Holmes Group. It is difficult to convince administrators and teachers of the value of professional development in the formative stage while others have Slavin is right in his characterization of enjoying a stage of "early enthusiasm" stories led to widespread "dissemination" the stage of progressive "disappointment"

What are the likely signs that the decline in these established settings? (years of strenuous effort in a PDS site (public) would be asking for proof that improvement are coming true. But given that education as an enterprise and the difficulty to a particular setting, it is likely that comes that one can point to at these abundantly evident because of all the less evident that the restructuring has deficiencies that spurred school people. If old reform patterns hold, teacher weary of the sustained effort that is resulting in equivocal results.

After a PDS has been in operation, it is likely to ask the same kinds of outcomes and maintaining a PDS is a very costly and effort. Having paid for all the (like school people) are going to want. Also at this stage, academics who are going to be asking questions about the social rationale, and the connection between school people have an advantage over outsiders in the PDS effort because they have direct experience going, while others learn about PDS from official reports. Relying on insiders

ability of academic shamanism to bring about the ritual healing of a school system's ailments collapses as soon as voices in both school and university begin to suggest that the shaman is wearing no clothes.

The Holmes Group effort to professionalize teaching finds itself in the middle of its own credibility dilemma. The initial report grounded the reform firmly in the scientific research on teaching that came out of the university, using what Buchmann calls "the social authority of science" to establish the credibility and feasibility of its proposals for improving education. Colleges of education that are members of the Holmes Group have drawn on this credibility to convince administrators and teachers to cooperate with them in the establishment of professional development schools. Some of these PDSs are still in the formative stage while others have been in operation for several years. If Slavin is right in his characterization of reform cycles, the former may well be enjoying a stage of "early enthusiasm," while the latter (whose early success stories led to widespread "dissemination" of the PDS model) may be entering the stage of progressive "disappointment."

What are the likely signs that the credibility of the PDS effort might be in decline in these established settings? One might well expect that after several years of strenuous effort in a PDS site, teachers and administrators (and the public) would be asking for proof that the university's promises of educational improvement are coming true. But given the enormous complexity of education as an enterprise and the difficulty of adapting general academic principles to a particular setting, it is likely that there is little progress in educational outcomes that one can point to at these sites. Process changes are going to be abundantly evident because of all the restructuring taking place, but it may be less evident that the restructuring has led to improvements in the educational deficiencies that spurred school people to embrace the reform in the first place. If old reform patterns hold, teachers and administrators are likely to grow weary of the sustained effort that is required in a PDS site given the minimal or equivocal results.

After a PDS has been in operation for a while, funding agencies are likely to ask the same kinds of outcome questions that educators will. Creating and maintaining a PDS is a very costly proposition, in money as well as in time and effort. Having paid for all the effort and heard all the promises, funders (like school people) are going to want to see some sort of definable results. Also at this stage, academics who are not involved in the PDS movement are going to be asking questions about the movement's assumptions, its theoretical rationale, and the connection between its procedures and its effects. School people have an advantage over outsiders in establishing the credibility of the PDS effort because they have direct empirical knowledge about how it is going, while others learn about PDS progress only through the movement's official reports. Relying on insiders to produce the evaluation of the PDS suc-

cess temporarily protects the movement from outside criticism, but this can hardly last for long. (Slavin (1989) noted that reformers typically try to limit information about how things are going to the kind of success stories that help spur imitation rather than sober evaluation.) Academic acceptance of the credibility of the reform can only come when evidence appears in a suitably academic form—such as scientific studies of these sites performed by disinterested researchers. However, continuing reluctance to allow these sorts of studies will only serve to discredit the whole enterprise within the university. Meanwhile, funding agencies are likely to demand outside evaluations of how their money is being spent and what the consequences are. All of these tendencies suggest that credibility problems are already brewing for the PDS movement.

Interests Served

In addition to the credibility issue, there is another and even more obvious problem that emerges from this analysis of why school people enlist in a university-based reform effort: everyone cannot be right in their assessment of the benefits of cooperation. Given the contradictory expectations that different groups have about the fruits of university involvement in district affairs, someone has to be mistaken. The university cannot simultaneously serve the public interest and serve to protect administrators from the public; and it cannot both give administrators more control over teachers and give teachers more power in dealing with administrators.

The source of confusion about the university's role in reform is its claim of neutrality. This is also a key source of its authority. People of all sorts who seek to affect public policy tend to call on the university to support their position, and the reason is that this institution projects an air of disinterested expertise that is a useful commodity in the rhetoric of reform. If you can cite university research to back your policy proposal, you can assert that this proposal is not then just an expression of your own partisan preferences but a logical deduction from the realm of scientifically certified truth. Having research to back your position means in effect having the facts on your side, since, as Buchmann noted, "[s]cientific knowledge and judgment are opaque and indisputable to most people." The phrase "research says" is thus a conversation stopper, a trump card, because it calls in the authority of science and the objectivity of the expert to vanquish an opposing position, making that position appear to consist of nothing but conjecture and self-interest.

As I noted earlier, the credibility of the university's claim to have answers to the practical problems of schooling is dubious at best, but equally dubious is its claim of objectivity. My contention is that the university has its own interests that it advances through its interventions in schools, and, to the extent that these interventions tend to benefit anyone in the school system, it is

to reinforce the position of school as public. Consider the example of the

As I have argued at greater length (in press), the Holmes Group's vision of the status needs of teacher education and its rational worldview that fueled their attack on the normal school, teacher education, and the academic prestige ladder. During the 1970s, schools evolved into teachers colleges, and teacher educators rose with them, late and bearing the stigma of the new movement. Yet the rules of academic science within the university, professors' research activities, especially those in education. Throughout this century, education science of teaching, with little success. Teacher educators launched a reform movement based on the behavioral scientific paradigm and set off a landslide of reform. Since then has been so great that it is hard to summarize the recent research on teacher education (Gage, 1963; Gage, 1990).

In the form developed by the education reform movement is a projection of the education school faculties that is, in effect, a teacher's professional knowledge about teaching generated by the movement will be the result of this research in the first place. The result of their research productivity and the result of their research in schools. The ones with the most to gain from themselves, despite the movement's status enhancement.

The problems posed for teacher education cuts the strongest claim teachers can make for knowledge of teaching acquired through university-generated research knowledge and professionalism. To acquire this knowledge is at the hands of education professorship (a requirement). Fundamentally, the movement will call for teachers to accept the

to reinforce the position of school administrators against both teachers and the public. Consider the example of the Holmes Group.

As I have argued at greater length elsewhere (Labaree, 1990; 1992; in press), the Holmes Group's vision of teacher professionalization arose from the status needs of teacher educators within the university and from the formal-rational worldview that fueled their status attainment effort. Since the days of the normal school, teacher educators have always been at the low end of the academic prestige ladder. During the course of the twentieth century, normal schools evolved into teachers colleges that in turn rose to the status of universities, and teacher educators rose with them. Arriving in the university relatively late and bearing the stigma of the normal school, these professors found themselves ill-equipped to compete for professional standing within this environment. Yet the rules of academic status were well defined. To gain prestige within the university, professors needed to pursue a vigorous agenda of research activities, especially those framed in the methodology of science. Throughout this century, educational researchers have tried to develop a viable science of teaching, with little success (Tom, 1984). But starting in the 1960s, teacher educators launched a remarkably successful effort in this vein that drew on the behavioral scientific paradigm pioneered by educational psychologists and set off a landslide of research publication. The quantity of output since then has been so great that it has taken three large handbooks just to summarize the recent research on teaching and another to summarize the research on teacher education (Gage, 1963; Travers, 1973; Wittrock, 1986; Houston, 1990).

In the form developed by the Holmes Group, the teacher professionalization movement is a projection of the worldview and the status concerns of the education school faculties that make up its leadership.¹ From this perspective, a teacher's professional knowledge should be grounded in the scientific knowledge about teaching generated in the university, and the primary beneficiaries of the movement will be the same education professors who performed this research in the first place. They gain enhanced prestige in the university for their research productivity and they also gain enhanced influence in the schools. The ones with the most to lose in this reform effort are the teachers themselves, despite the movement's rhetoric about teacher empowerment and status enhancement.

The problems posed for teachers are multiple. The Holmes Group undercuts the strongest claim teachers can make to professionalism—their practical knowledge of teaching acquired through clinical practice—by promoting university-generated research knowledge as the authoritative basis for professionalism. To acquire this knowledge will, of course, require extended instruction at the hands of education professors (through an upgraded professional education requirement). Fundamentally, the Holmes vision of professionalization will call for teachers to accept the authority of theoretical knowledge and to

acknowledge their professional responsibility to reconstruct their own classroom practice in order to fit it into the rationalized notion of practice defined by this structure of knowledge. Finally, teachers in professional development schools will find themselves working closely with those same education professors, who potentially will be looking to see if the teachers are in fact demonstrating professional (that is, research-based) practices in the classroom. This is far from the vision of collaboration and reflection that teachers may have been hoping for in the PDS environment; rather it looks like a case of subordination to both the university and its vision of schooling.

For administrators, however, the Holmes Group and PDS involvement offer some substantial benefits. The alliance with the university seems to offer help in keeping the public at bay, by allowing the administration to project an image of doing something authoritative to improve schools (the healing ritual) and by building a wall of expertise between schools and the ordinary citizen. In addition, the vision of professionalized teaching that emerges from Holmes is compatible with the administrator's vision in many ways, since they both seek to overcome the idiosyncratic autonomy of teaching practice fostered by the present organization of schooling. Holmes is trying to do this by setting research-based standards for professional practice, which provide legitimate criteria for outsiders to get past the door of the self-contained classroom and reshape the way teachers teach—something administrators have been trying to do for years without much success. In this sense, the university-bred brand of teacher professionalization may help bring about what bureaucratization could not—the rationalization of teaching.

CONCLUSION

The question I asked at the beginning of this chapter was: Why do school administrators and teachers choose to go along with university-based reform efforts? The short answer is that they both hope to gain something from the involvement, and, in the case of administrators, this assessment may indeed be accurate. At least in the case of the Holmes Group's initiative to professionalize teaching, administrators seem to have something to gain, even though the biggest beneficiaries of that initiative seem to be the Holmes Group's own membership. This gain may be real even if the credibility of the professionalizers fades as a result of what promises to be a weak demonstration of their practical effects on schools. After all, the benefits to administrators do not necessarily come from the improvement in student learning but instead from the improvement of the administration's position in relation to the public and teachers. However, my analysis suggests that teachers are likely to get the

short end of the stick, even from supposedly dedicated to their ad

Let me qualify that conc counter-current in the PDS project promotes the kind of rationalization I have identified here,² the fact enterprise are frequently work teachers in individual professional taking collaboration seriously listening as much as talking, t advocates within the PDS effort the ground level, the PDS expect kind of reflective experience: sympathetic outsider whose provide useful insights into the problem, however, is that this goes with the agenda of the official prestige of the university, and of the leadership. Ironically, the professionalization movement are rather than because of it.

1. Another branch of emerged at the same time: to be a different road. The National Forum, 1986), seems to value teacher professionalism and clinical skill over university professors and each working community university professors.

2. When I say that negative consequences of arguing that they intend sense is that the aims of actions for teachers and the scientist I suggest, nonetheless h

short end of the stick, even from a reform movement named in their honor and supposedly dedicated to their advancement.

Let me qualify that conclusion, however, by pointing to an important counter-current in the PDS project. While the leadership of the PDS effort promotes the kind of rationalization of teaching and subordination of teachers that I have identified here,² the faculty members serving as the footsoldiers in this enterprise are frequently working out their own agenda on the ground with teachers in individual professional development schools. These professors are taking collaboration seriously—developing close relationships with teachers, listening as much as talking, teaching as well as observing, acting as teacher-advocates within the PDS effort more than as PDS agents to the teachers. At the ground level, the PDS experiment may be producing for some teachers the kind of reflective experience they had hoped for, by giving them contact with a sympathetic outsider whose independence and theoretical framework may provide useful insights into the nature of their own situated practice. The problem, however, is that this ground-level reform effort is at odds in many ways with the agenda of the official reform movement. The money, the institutional prestige of the university, and the social authority of science are all on the side of the leadership. Ironically, the benefits to teachers from the teacher professionalization movement are more likely to come in spite of this movement rather than because of it.

NOTES

1. Another branch of the teacher professionalization movement, that emerged at the same time as the Holmes Group, is now taking what appears to be a different road. The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, which was set up in response to the Carnegie report on teaching (Carnegie Forum, 1986), seems to be moving away from a research-based model of teacher professionalism and toward a practical-knowledge model, valuing clinical skill over university training. The key reason: a majority of the Board and each working committee within its jurisdiction is made up of teachers not university professors.

2. When I say that the efforts of Holmes Group and PDS leaders bring negative consequences for teachers and serve their own interests, I am not arguing that they intend to bring about these outcomes. Far from it. My strong sense is that the aims of the teacher professionalizers are to improve the conditions for teachers and to elevate the quality of schooling. However, their actions and the scientific intellectual framework that guides these actions are, I suggest, nonetheless harmful in their potential because they are unintended.

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