

INVESTIGATING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE:
A STUDY OF AN INTER-AGENCY EDUCATION
COMMITTEE

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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Investigating the Professional Development Alliance:
A study of an inter-agency education committee

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

The Professional Development Alliance (PDA) is an alliance of educational organizations in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador established to promote professional development among educators. There is a need to explore the challenges faced by such an inter-agency organization in achieving its objectives. The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the formation of the PDA, the development of its model for teacher professional development and the perceived supports and barriers to the implementation process. A qualitative approach was used to gather data through interviews with each member of the PDA committee. Interviews were taped, transcribed and analysed using both inductive and deductive methods. Analysis of these interviews revealed how and why the PDA was formed and how the PDA developed an inter-agency framework for teacher professional development. Factors unique to Newfoundland and Labrador appear to support inter-agency collaboration although barriers to implementing the PDA model remain to be overcome. It is concluded that explicit identification and resolution of potential difficulties needs to be part of the ongoing inter-agency process.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of abbreviations	viii
List of Appendices	ix
 Chapter 1 Introduction	 1
Statement of the problem	1
Background to the problem	2
Professional Development Alliance	3
Focus of the study	7
Objectives of the study	7
 Chapter 2 Review of the literature	 8
Educational context of teacher professional development	8
Reform context	8
Impact of reforms	9
Models of professional development	10
Adult learning	10
Collaborative models	11
Policy and policy development	13
Changing models of professional development	16
Inter-agency collaboration	16

Implementing change	18
Summary	25
Chapter 3 Method	28
Study design	28
Sources of data	29
Symposium	29
Preliminary literature review	29
Interviews	29
Participants	30
Public documents	31
Data analysis	32
Inductive approach	32
Deductive, theory-informed approach	33
Reflection on research process	33
Credibility of knowledge	33
Researcher's role	34
Ethical considerations	35
Chapter 4 Results	36
Foundations of the PDA.....	36
Structure of the PDA	38
Developing the work of the PDA	40

Developing the model for teacher professional development ...	41
PDA model and policy development	43
Implementation of the PDA model	45
Authority of the PDA	45
Implementation process	47
Pace of change	48
Presenting the model	49
The impact of the symposium	51
Vision of the impact of the PDA model	52
Teaching and learning	52
Teacher professionalism	53
Organizational change	55
Inter-agency processes in a learning organization	56
Personal mastery	57
Mental models	58
Shared vision	59
Team learning	61
Systems thinking	63
Implementation of an inter-agency model	64
Inter-agency process	65
Structural supports	68
Local perspectives	72

Chapter 5 Discussion	76
Limitations of the study.....	76
Main findings	77
Origins of PDA	77
Membership of PDA	78
Potential impact of PDA model on member organizations	81
Insight into inter-agency collaboration	84
Developing the policy	84
Implementing the policy	84
Local factors	86
Key factors in successful inter-agency work	87
Conclusions and recommendations	91
 References.....	 96

List of Abbreviations

APEF:	Atlantic Provinces' Education Foundation
CAETO:	Canadian Association of Education and Training Organizations
NLTA:	Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDA:	Professional Development Alliance

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Research questions and interview topics	104
Appendix B	Consent form	106
Appendix C	Letter requesting participation	108
Appendix D	PowerPoint slides and handouts from PDA symposium	110

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Professional Development Alliance (PDA), a multi-agency committee in the field of education, was formed in the year 2000 and since then it has worked to develop a new collaborative framework for teacher professional development in Newfoundland and Labrador. This study examines the establishment of the PDA and the processes involved in the development and implementation of its model for teacher professional development and draws some conclusions for future inter-agency policy development.

Statement of the problem

Many researchers have noted that policy development is a key tool that supports continuing education reform (Ball, 1994; Clune, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Delaney, 2002; Fuhrman, 1993; Levin, 2000; & Taylor, Rivzi, Lingard & Henry, 1997). The work of inter-agency groups in areas related to policy development needs to be examined as this approach becomes more prevalent and is recognized as an important method for developing and implementing coherent reform policies. The PDA is an example of a inter-agency group that has worked together to produce a framework for teacher professional development, that is coherent with other ongoing provincial reform initiatives linked to school improvement and policy changes. In recent years new curricula have been developed and implemented within the K-12 system. The introduction of provincial curriculum-referenced testing in Newfoundland and Labrador are examples of reforms that have a similar area of concern.

There have been few studies of similar inter-agency groups working within this area in education (Alter & Hage, 1993; CAETO 2001; Edwards & Langford, 2002). Greater understanding of the processes involved and identification of factors that influenced the work of the PDA will provide insight into inter-organizational collaboration processes and best practices for the future.

Background to the problem

The Ministerial Panel report on Educational Delivery in the Classroom recommended that an inter-agency approach be used to develop a new model for teacher professional development (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2000). Prior to this the origins of the PDA can be found within various reports that have advocated for substantive and sustained reform of the education system of Newfoundland and Labrador. Since the 1990s successive governments in Newfoundland and Labrador have developed plans for restructuring and reforming education with the broad goals of improving schools and raising achievement standards for students. Improving the effectiveness of teacher professional development has been recognised as a key factor in the school-improvement process. In *Supporting Learning* (2000), a document prepared by the Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom, it was stated:

The reforms of the 1990s were driven by four major forces: (1) demographic trends, specifically a long term decline in enrolment; (2) the elimination and duplication of educational services; (3) financial constraints, as government attempted to reverse a lengthy period of deficit financing and (4) educational performance, more specifically the perception that the education system was not producing graduates with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in a rapidly changing society. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2000, p. 1)

This report goes on to acknowledge the need for continued reform due to broad societal expectations that schools will share responsibility to ensure that graduates are highly skilled and equipped to contribute to a complex and changing world. Supporting the principle of multi-agency cooperation, the report notes also that the Strategic Social Plan “envisages a close relationship among various departments and agencies in the social policy area and mandates that these agencies collaborate in focusing on strategies to address the most compelling social issues” (p. 3).

Throughout *Supporting Learning*, the authors support this general principle and go on to state: “schools ought to serve in a collaborative capacity with other agencies in society to help address issues” (p. 3). They assert that there is a need for “a rethinking of how professional development is delivered” (p. 32). Recommendation #47 stresses the need for the establishment of a professional development alliance, using a consortium model that would work towards a range of goals designed to improve the content and delivery of teacher professional development across the province. More specific points noted that this alliance would work to develop a shared annual professional development agenda, plan a new model of professional development institutes for teachers, develop a new system for recognizing participation in professional development activities, giving consideration to incentives, awards and certification and develop alternate approaches to professional development delivery. The Professional Development Alliance, an inter-agency steering committee, was formed in response to this recommendation.

Professional Development Alliance

Initially the PDA followed the advice of recommendation #47 and included representatives from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of

Education, provincial school district boards, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. Latterly, representatives from the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland were also included (PDA, 2002). These agencies and the individuals who work for them perform different roles within the education system based on different policies and procedures and also they share a common concern with improving education. Several members of the PDA served on or were advisors to the ministerial panel that made the recommendations for a collaborative professional development committee.

Since its formation there have been some personnel changes in the PDA but each agency continues to be represented. In October 2002, the PDA held a symposium that brought together approximately 200 people from each of the stakeholder groups, to present a newly developed model for teacher professional development and get feedback on the framework (PDA, 2002).

The PDA model for teacher professional development supports a comprehensive and complex approach to professional development that has the potential for supporting systemic changes and continuing school development within the education system. The PDA framework aims to reflect each of the recommendations of the Ministerial Panel report and it has proposed a model of teacher professional development that supports individualized, collaborative, practice based, professional growth plans that are directly linked to improving teaching and learning.

The PDA presented their framework for teacher professional development at a symposium held in St. John's Newfoundland on October 3 and 4, 2002. In a group presentation the essential elements of good teacher professional development were

summarized. Presenters stated that the professional development of teachers should be linked directly to student learning needs and broader organizational learning needs, and delivery models should reflect changes in society and within education. The teacher's professional development experience needs to be consistent with each individual's growth plan, and ought to communicate respect for the teacher's right as an autonomous professional to identify and choose the focus and nature of each professional learning experience. Professional development processes and experiences should be based on collaborative models of adult learners and life-long learning, and diverse delivery models and teaching styles should be used to support professional development that is "accessible, affordable, sustainable and relevant" (PDA, 2002, p.32).

The PDA model for teacher professional development reflects current beliefs about the most effective and efficient approaches, derived from international educational research findings (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992, 2000; Guskey, 2002; McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996; Sparkes, 2001; Sparkes & Hirsch, 1997).

In *Supporting Learning*, the panel recommended that a "consortium model" (p. 32) involving government, the teachers professional association and schools boards should be adopted to establish an alliance that would work toward shared goals. The authors support involving the teachers' association by noting that the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) had been a long time provider of professional development to its members through its branches and special interest councils. They also describe a continued failure by governments and school boards to effectively implement new curriculum due, in part, to the costs of providing professional development in the

traditional manner. To increase the effectiveness of teacher professional development they advocated an integrated approach based on multi-agency collaboration.

The PDA model of collaboration involves all the agencies that provide direct or indirect services to those who work within the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador. This broad membership model is interesting because each agency within the PDA is concerned with teacher professional development, however, it is likely that each would place different emphasis or have a different perspective on the significance of the proposed changes to the current model. The NLTA is concerned with teacher welfare, protecting jobs and improving working conditions as well as supporting the professional growth of teachers. The Faculty of Education at Memorial University is concerned with the provision of pre- and post-service academic qualifications. The Department of Education has regulatory responsibilities and needs to ensure that teachers meet minimum pre-service standards and have appropriate qualifications. This department also strives to ensure that mandated curriculum is delivered and that educational standards improve in relation to national and international surveys such as those conducted by OECD. At the local level, provincial school boards also need to ensure that teachers are prepared and competent to teach, fulfill employment contracts and adhere to accepted standards of professionalism.

It is apparent that the PDA is innovative and has implications for the development of comparable educational initiatives. This research project was developed to explore how the PDA was formed and what it has accomplished since its formation.

Focus of the Study

The focus of this study was on the PDA members' perceptions of the purpose of their work, what they have achieved and how they worked together within an inter-agency context. The goal of the study was to illuminate the factors that supported or undermined the development and implementation of the PDA model.

Research Questions

This study explored the following questions in an attempt to identify the specific factors that have had an impact how the PDA worked to develop and implement a comprehensive framework for teacher professional development:

1. Why was the PDA formed?
2. How was the PDA formed?
3. How was the PDA model developed?
4. What factors contributed to the development of the model?
5. What factors have supported the implementation process?

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

This chapter provides an assessment of recent research on new models of effective teacher professional development, educational policy development practices and inter-agency collaboration. It considers the broader educational context within which these models developed, their conceptual bases and their links with policy development.

Educational context for changing teacher professional development

Reform context

Many current reforms in education are driven by a quest for higher standards of performance as measured by the results of standardized tests. International agencies propose that through meaningful inclusive educational experiences, more students can achieve at higher levels than previously expected (OECD, 2001). New curricula have been designed to help students improve problem solving and critical thinking skills, e.g., APEF curriculum development in Atlantic Canada (APEF, 2002). At the same time, educators are expected to deliver higher quality education within available budgets, and use instructional strategies that will produce highly educated high-school graduates who can function effectively in competitive, technological, and global and knowledge-based economies (OECD, 2001).

In Canada some curriculum developers perceive that teachers need to be taught about the underlying assumptions of the content of new curricula, while being supported in developing new teaching strategies for collaborative inquiry-based learning (CAETO, 2001; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2000). Novick (1996) asserts that

classroom-based teaching strategies are changing because traditional didactic methodologies have not been effective in promoting desired educational outcomes, and suggests that poor teaching or inadequate teaching strategies may have undermined earlier reforms. These views are supported to some extent, by findings that teachers who use inquiry-based learning and experiential, performance-based approaches to teaching can raise educational achievement standards for students on international, standardized tests, and may even reduce the negative impact on student performance of low social economic status (Holzman, 1997; Wenglinsky, 2002).

Effective teachers need to learn about and understand how to use new approaches to instruction within multiple learning contexts, and they need to know how to teach and model meta-cognitive thinking strategies and differentiated approaches to problem solving. Also, they need to reflect these new approaches to teaching when measuring student learning and evaluating performance (Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1994).

Impact of reforms

Much research into the effectiveness of broad based education reforms has shown that while broader policies and organizational structures have been changed, the direct impact of these reforms in improving instructional strategies and on student performance was much less than the policy makers had predicted or hoped (Clune, 1993; Fuhrman, 1993; Levin, 2001). Bredeson and Scribner (2000) have stated that reforms based on linking teacher learning to student learning are most likely to achieve improved student outcomes and note that for reforms to be successful, three types of change are needed. First, we need to re-design the content and delivery style of teacher professional development;

secondly schools need to re-think how they can facilitate the introduction of new models of teacher professional development and finally, a broad culture of collaborative, inquiry-led, learning relationships needs to become pervasive with the entire education system.

Some examples of systemic standards based educational reform, similar to that advocated by Bredeson and Scribner (2000), that incorporate teacher professional development as a central priority, are detailed by Borko, Elliott and Uchiyama (2003) in their description of education reform in Kentucky, USA. They propose that specific elements within the Kentucky model combine to promote different dimensions of school capacity. These include the individual teacher's level of knowledge and skills, the existence of a professional learning community and reforms that reflect program coherence.

Models of professional development

Adult learning

Effective teacher professional development programs usually aim to help teachers be more effective in helping students learn. However, programming does not always account for the specific needs of teachers as adult learners. Research in the field of adult education has shown that there are aspects within the internal learning processes of adults, as well as external factors, that influence the quality and quantity of learning and need to be considered. Kennedy (2003) asserts that adults perceive themselves as self-directing, responsible, mature and independent learners and he states that adult learners tend to resist situations if they are not treated as responsible adults. He argues that adult learners have to overcome some internal barriers to learning as well, such as fear of

failure and diminished speed and retention of learning. Effective teacher education programs need to take account of these challenges.

Collaborative models

Cordiero and Loup (1997) propose that teacher professional development programming needs to model partnerships, based on the principles of collaborative leadership that are widely espoused within the education community. To support the professional growth of teachers they propose that programs should reflect theories of adult learning and take place in environments that are supportive, safe and also challenging. Learning should be connected to the current and past experiences of the learners and should utilize multiple formats for learning such as research teams, independent study, situated learning, and cohorts of learners working together.

The professional development of teachers is recognised as integral to better practice in the classroom and as a necessary pre-requisite to improving student performance (Alvaredo, 1998). However, it is not enough to offer more professional development opportunities for teachers; the delivery style, setting and content of teacher professional development programs and experiences need to change also. Revised standards for teacher development published by the National Association for Staff Development (Sparkes, 2001) reflect their understanding of the needs of adult learners, and emphasise the value of professional development that is experienced within learning communities, embedded within the lived experiential practice of the teacher, and that is also focused on improving specific student learning outcomes. More specifically, with a focus on one type of educational setting, Knight (2003) proposes that for secondary

teachers their subject departments are “prime sites for non-predictable professional learning,” and advocates for systemic reviews of current professional development policies and practices within schools.

Traditionally, teacher professional development has been designed to inform teachers about curriculum changes and provide opportunities to develop new skills. It has tended to take place as a series of isolated lectures or workshops, and was dependent on delivery from experts (Burbank & Kauchak, 2003). As a result, many teachers have perceived professional development experiences as events that have had no direct connection to classroom practice or to student learning (Darling-Hammond, 1997; DuFour & Burnette, 1998; Owen, 2003; Sparkes & Hirsch, 1997). These top-down and expert-led methods, focused on the transmission of information about mandated curriculum, or were directed at the acquisition of generic strategies and skills, with little follow-up or long-term support. Such approaches have not engaged or empowered teachers to take ownership of their own needs to continuously refine and improve classroom instructional practice and they do not reflect current evidence-based practices (Cohen & Hill, 2001, DuFour & Burnette, 1998; Lambert, 1989, Owen, 2003).

Szabo (2002), also, asserts that traditional teacher professional development approaches have failed to improve teaching practice in classrooms, because these have been removed from the context of schools and everyday practice and are not connected to individual or organizational growth plans. He goes further to state that the delivery processes have been intrinsically disempowering and may have undermined the content message, as has the lack of opportunity to collaborate, contribute or follow-up.

There is increasing awareness of the importance of enabling continuing professional development for teachers that is focused on enhancing learning for all students, and supports systemic education reform and school improvement efforts, (Bredeson & Scribner, 2000; Fullan, 1995; Guskey, 2002). To be effective in meeting these goals, it is asserted by many leading researchers that the contexts, content, processes and focus of teacher professional development will have to change (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Guskey, 1995; Little, 1994; McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996; OECD, 1998; Sparkes, 2001; Sparkes & Hirsch, 1997).

Policy and policy development

The PDA have presented their model not as a policy to be followed, but as a framework to apply. However, there are aspects of the PDA proposal that, if adopted, will probably lead to systemic policy changes within each organization in terms of how and by whom professional development is delivered and how it is funded. To understand the potential impact of the PDA some consideration of theories of policy and policy making is necessary.

Educational policy is defined by Caldwell and Spinks (1988) as “a statement of purpose” and as “one or more broad guidelines as to how that purpose is achieved” (p. 41). Levin and Young (1998) describe policy as “a general approach to things, intended to guide behaviour and which has broad implications within a particular setting” (p. 60). Clemmer (1991) describes different types of educational policies and categorizes them in terms of their “purpose, subject, breadth of application and derivation” (p. 164). He goes on to state that consequential policies arise from outside pressures on school systems,

unofficial policies evolve in the work place and become accepted over time while other policies arise when decisions are referred upward within hierarchies for help with decision making. Formal policies are those that Delaney (2002) describes as “consciously and officially developed by the educational organization” (p. 26).

Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997) categorize policies in dichotomous categories, e.g. policies may deal with some aspects of distributing or re-distributing resources; they can be symbolic and “have broad, vague, ambiguous abstract goal statements with little or no resource commitment and little thought given to implementation strategies” (p. 34). Policies may describe a specific allocation of material resources, adopt a rational pre-determined or an incremental evolutionary approach, describe either what will happen or focus on procedures for policy implementation and finally they may adopt a regulatory controlling approach or reflect deregulatory approaches that minimise government controls.

Using another perspective, Delaney (2002) lists how the potential impact of policy on practice within organizations can be used to describe and categorize policies. Some policies are restrictive and prescriptive and aim to mandate compliance while others focus on capacity building and may use inducements to enable employees to develop and make choices. McDonnell and Elmore (1991) describe some policies as system changing when they involve the sharing or transfer of power and authority within or between agencies.

Some theorists posit policy development as a rational three-stage process in which an initial values-driven or political decision is made, followed by a description of the steps required to achieve the goal and finally a consideration of how the policy will work

within the bureaucratic structures of government (Delaney, 2002). Others believe that policy-making is less rational and describe it as a messier political process influenced by simultaneous and conflicting external and internal pressures (Taylor et al., 1997; Levin, 2001).

Similarly, Ball (1994) proposes that policymaking is essentially unpredictable and irrational, and he states:

“... policy-making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalizing theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything that looks like it might work. Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are re-worked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex process of influence, text production, dissemination and ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice. (p. 126)

The difficulties of policy making, asserts Ball (1994), require that any analysis should aim to capture the “messiness and complexity and still be penetrating” (p. 9).

Most policy-making models are based on theoretical constructs that aim to explain policy development by considering the processes within various stages (Howlett & Ramesh, 1997). Although he acknowledges the unpredictable influences of political power and circumstance in directing policy making, Levin (2001) asserts that rational analysis of educational policy reform processes is possible. He identifies four stages of policy-making: origins, adoption, implementation and outcomes. Using Levin’s approach, an analysis of policy development should consider the origins of the policy, its adoption and the implementation processes, and aim to provide a review of its impact.

Based on these theories of what policy is, the proposed PDA model for teacher professional development could be viewed and analysed as a policy from different perspectives. The PDA proposal appears to fit into a number of the categories described

here. It is broad-based and designed to build capacity. If adopted and implemented, it is likely to bring about systemic and procedural changes within each member organization.

Changing models of professional development

Inter-agency collaboration

Research into organizations that has been applied to education has focused mainly on internal organizational processes. Organizational reform theorists such as Senge (1990) promote a concept of effective “learning organizations” that are based on collaborative teams who learn together within organizations, and work towards achieving goals based on a shared vision. Similarly change theorist, Michael Fullan (2001) recommends that organizations must recognize the need for complex collective responses to the difficult problems faced by education providers. However, he adds that education reformers cannot mandate effective change through “top-down, blueprinted strategies, reengineering or relentless innovativeness” (p.111).

In response to the complexities of the broad education system there has been growth in inter-agency and multi-agency collaboration within education as part of restructuring and reform initiatives. Leithwood et al. (1994) note: “shrinking school budgets, ... increasing demands for accountability are clarion calls for educators to rethink how to accomplish their objectives. They suggest: “educational partnerships hold considerable potential for addressing these challenges” (p. 125).

There are many examples of policy development alliances and consortia in education: there are partnerships between schools, school boards and universities; governments and teachers’ associations frequently try to work together; and governments

and schools and university departments often collaborate (Restine, 1995). Within Canada, organizations such as CAETO advocate for the improvement of education and training through collaborative partnerships, and support their ideas by looking at examples from other areas of society, including private business, where they assert that collaborative processes have proliferated (CAETO, 2001).

There have been precedents within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador of multi-agency projects that have tried to develop congruent, efficient and effective service delivery models, e.g. the model for coordination of services to children and youth with special needs in Newfoundland and Labrador was based on a memorandum of understanding between government departments dealing with child and youth services, justice, health and education (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.). The Atlantic Provinces' Education Foundation (APEF, 2002) is an example of a consortium of representatives of departments of education throughout Atlantic Canada that has collaborated to develop a common, coherent, effective and efficient curriculum with shared resources within the K-12 systems of the four Atlantic provinces of Canada.

From national and international perspectives, the federal governments of Canada and Australia have initiated reforms designed to span artificially constructed barriers between government departments and improve the quality of service (Edwards & Langford, 2002). Similarly, in the Republic of Ireland, reforms of government have tried to promote inter-departmental communication and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided (Edwards & Langford, 2002).

There has not been a great deal of research into the effectiveness of inter-agency collaborations that have occurred within the public sector. Most, but not all, research in

this field has examined partnerships, collaborative relationships and networks from private business perspectives. In a review of private sector and public sector inter-agency networks Alter and Hage (1993) found that several factors have promoted the proliferation of multi-agency collaboration through “joint ventures, strategic alliances and systemic networks” (p. 43). They propose that three necessary pre-conditions create motivation for successful collaboration: “the need for expertise, the need for funds, and the need for adaptive efficiency.” (p. 42). They describe four other factors that may determine the success or failure of the enterprise: “the culture of trust, the complexity of the task, the existence of highly specialized niches and the emergence of small units” (p. 42). They argue that small, specialized units engaged in complex tasks can collaborate more easily and give some examples of successful collaborations within the public services sector in the United states that have “engaged in specialization for some time” (p. 43) and they note that specific local conditions can facilitate the growth of similar types of network-based relationships.

Implementing change

In analysing the factors that support the work of inter-organizational networks Alter and Hage (1993) noted the significance of a common vision and explicitly shared goals in building consensus. However, they also advise that a common source of conflict is around the means used to reach the common goal. They found that effective multi-agency collaborations are non-hierarchical and are most effective if one member does not dominate. To avoid domination by one member they advocate for a clear division of labour, specific areas of responsibility and the promotion of simultaneous increased inter-

dependency that will lead to the surrender of sovereignty and democratic diffusion of power within the group, through a slow evolutionary process. Alter and Hage (1993) assert that multi-group collaborations may fail “because they have been established without sufficient incubation time for exchange relationships to develop” (p. 80). They cite examples of successful Japanese business networks that have developed slowly, building trust and common cognitive structures so that information exchange, creative problem solving and collective action could proceed.

Based on their findings, Alter and Hage (1993) propose that certain antecedent conditions are required for successful inter-agency collaboration. These are abundant time for development of ideas, a high priority given to development of inter-organizational relationships, self-reflective awareness of the current conditions, and finally, they suggest that intra-organizational technologies such as non-hierarchical management structures are also required to support the process.

It is interesting to highlight that Alter and Hage (1993) assert that a distinguishing feature of inter-organizational relationships is that they are “conflict ridden” (p. 86) as the individuals within organizations try to change to adapt to new models of working, changes in leadership style and role functions. They suggest that lessening the potential for inter-personal and inter-organizational conflict will require some structural supports such as “regularly scheduled committees, written policies and formal rules” (p. 91).

In exploring the potential for conflict within collaborative models, Alter and Hage (2003) also propose that the nature of the task, its scope and the number of variables, the intensity and duration of the task, the volume of work and the uncertainty of outcomes combine with multiple variables within each organization and within each person to

create a complex problem-solving situation. If quality or high performance is an outcome then complexity is added.

Outside influences such as resource availability and environmental determinants may also constrain or support inter-organizational collaboration. Wildavsky (as cited in Alter & Hage, 1993) argues that the amount of cooperation within networks and the choice of methods used for collaboration may be linked to external controls: “networks may be functional, dysfunctional, effective or ineffective, because of the political and economic forces affecting them and the ability of members to change these dynamics, and outcomes can be successful only within limits”. If the autonomy of members within the group decreases due to external pressures, e.g., if input to the group is mandated, and membership of the group is not voluntary, there is the potential for greater conflict and less co-operation (Alter & Hage, 1993).

In a study of how strategic alliances work in the business world, Kemeny and Yanowitz (2000) describe similar findings. They state that there should be less emphasis on the financial and contractual aspects of collaboration, and more on “the human factors - the ways that people think and interact” (p. 62). Using findings derived from studies of cross-organizational initiatives within private companies, they note that “the fundamental challenge in integrating parts of a system is in creating alignment among individuals and groups who see the world differently - who have different goals, norms, perceptions and priorities”(p. 63). They assert that the ‘greater the strategic benefit of an alliance, the greater the challenge of cross-organizational integration and the more critical the attention to human factors” (p. 63). The barriers that they identify are the difficulties with “coping with increasing complexity, aligning contrasting orientations and combining

cultures” (p. 63). They go on to state that, “exacerbating the difficulty is the real likelihood that the alliance partners will have different goals - and that neither partner will appreciate the implications of the differences” (p. 65). They assert that relatively simple alliances that exist within organizations are difficult enough to manage and maintain that it is “advisable for all organizations - and essential for cross-organizational alliances - to replace the paradigm ‘divide and conquer’ with ‘connect and comprehend’ ” (p. 65).

Kemeny and Yanowitz (2000) present several principles that they believe will support successful strategic alliances. There is a need to clearly articulate the long term and short-term goals of the alliance and use accomplishment of short-term goals to generate trust and confidence. Partners should be selected to facilitate win-win situations and may have existing working relationships based on collaboration and mutual trust. An alliance needs to be able to work at strategic and lower operational levels and team members should include people with decision-making authority as well as others who have tactical hands-on experience. New members need to be integrated into the team so that “they understand how the goals and operating norms of this activity are different from the ‘home’ organization” (p. 67).

It is acknowledged that this will take time as teams let go of old mental models and assume personal ownership of the alliance’s purpose. They advocate open communication, formal information sharing and feedback processes. They believe that alliances need to deal explicitly with conflicts and culture clashes. It is important to “avoid minimizing conflict and differences” and “hold frank discussions of past breakdowns and problems” (p. 69). While they acknowledge that it can help if an alliance

has a champion, they emphasize that it should not rely on one person. However, in the initial stages strong executive sponsorship is recommended “when team members may feel exposed or vulnerable being part of a new activity that is unproved and may be regarded with scepticism by other parts of the organization.” (p. 69). Recognizing that cross-organizational alliances are becoming increasingly important, Kemeny and Yanowitz, (2000) contend that “mastery of the ability to create and sustain these alliances may become a critical success factor” (p. 70) for all organizations.

Klein (1990) outlined specific barriers to inter-professional collaboration. He emphasized that it is important to avoid the illusion of consensus. This can happen if agreement is reached too quickly around complex issues and core values are ignored. Communication problems can arise if a common core vocabulary is not used or if the group is too large. Klein argued that more than 4-5 distinct groups within an alliance would have great difficulty coping with a collaborative arrangement. He also asserted that a designated leader is needed to act as a champion for the project.

As educators develop partnerships within and between systems there is a need to re-think what collaboration means in practice for individuals as well as for organizations. Boyd and Croyson (2001) state that good collaborative practice involves boundary crossing, resource exchange, networking, shared objectives and a degree of selfless behaviour.

In a study of the effects of organizational boundaries on collaborative work in Scottish community education, Tett, Munn, Kay, Martin and Reason (2001) note that organizational hierarchies and boundaries within and between organizations and individuals present considerable barriers to collaborative practice. Organizations with

high boundaries tend to maintain separate spheres, especially if resources are in decline. Within hierarchical organizations boundary-spanning collaborations often result in role conflict if there are divergent priorities. Low boundaries can exist on an inter-organizational level when collaborative decision-making is practiced.

Within organizations there are individuals who are adept at managing new relationships between adults as their organizations become more complex (Cordiero, 1997). This means that individuals who transcend traditional boundaries of practice, tend to believe in collaboration as being both effective and efficient, can communicate in other cultures and model collaborative behaviour. Taking examples from the context of the business world, Johnson and Galvin (1997) point out that typical boundary-crossing behaviour involves sharing information and engaging in joint efforts with other organizations, but may be inhibited by traditional “bounded” policies and decision-makers.

Lipnak and Stamps (1995) use a model of boundary-crossing teams, “the team net factor” (p. 3), to examine the factors that promote inter-organizational collaboration. They describe elements that they believe must exist within a group to create successful interactions. The team must have a unifying purpose, have a critical number of committed members who are linked in a web of relationships. The partners in the network should each play a leadership role with different areas of responsibility. There should be connections between team members at multiple interactive levels within different environments. Membership of the network does not mean giving up independence, but members need to be able to enter each other’s work places and ‘visit’ other work cultures. This is similar to the concept of dynamic complexity proposed in

Senge's (1990) model of a learning organization. Complexity at this level leaves much room for misunderstanding and conflict. One reason for this could be, as Stacey (1992) has noted, that cause and effect in complex systems are difficult to connect and are not easy to trace.

Using the metaphor of the Portuguese "compradors" or buyers who traded with the Chinese many centuries ago, Cordiero (1997) supports the idea that to be successful, members of inter-organizational teams need to be very familiar with their own culture and with cultures in other communities, to be boundary spanners. Cordiero and Loup (1997) also assert that to support the development of collaboration between organizations there should be an assumption that relationships will be developed and supported at the institutional as well as at the individual level, and these should be legitimized within the structures, policies and practices of each organization.

Within the education milieu, and based on research into school-university partnerships, Restine (1995) suggests that underlying a successful move towards inter-organizational collaboration must be the recognition of the same core values and vision within each organization that provide a stable bedrock for action. Restine (1995) asserts: "developing genuine partnerships between school and institutions of higher education depends on realizing that many, if not most of the problems have a common connection" (p. 39). Restine notes that this is not a new phenomenon, and cites the work of educational theorist, Maeroff, who posits that the development of long term relationships and partnerships between different educational institutions is not a choice but essential, if we wish to provide for additional learning opportunities for children and adults.

Ridell and Tell (2001) suggest that the “idea of joined-up policy and inter-agency working is central to contemporary education and wider social policy agendas” (p.ii) because of the savings that “accrue to the treasury” (p. 8) and go to assert that “despite the rhetoric of evidence- based policy, in reality policy is often based on political whim or a human hunch that an idea culled from one particular setting may work in another” (p. 7). They support the idea of inter-agency work but emphasise that it needs to be based on a clear rationale and warn that “deep rooted cultural differences between professional groups, vested interests in maintaining departmental boundaries and statutory restrictions may undermine efforts to engage in partnership working” (p. 9).

In support of the importance of building relationships within collaborative alliances, Paranjpe (2000) states that such inter-organizational alliances are like marriage, and he asserts that these and all successful relationships are based on shared understanding and commitment. He notes the need to accept that individuals evolve at different rates and he proposes that real growth will develop from a foundation of trust within long-term partnerships.

Summary

This literature review considered the changing educational context within which professional development for teachers is being designed. It surveyed current research into effective models of teacher professional development, then educational policy development processes, and finally the organizational and individual factors that impact on inter-agency collaboration

Models of teacher professional development

Current research into educational reform supports the need for a greater focus on improving classroom-based practice through continuing professional development of teachers. Differentiated, needs driven, individualized and empowering approaches to professional development have been promoted by a range of researchers as being most likely to achieve positive results in terms of student outcomes, teacher engagement and professionalism.

Policy development processes

Over the past two decades policy change and educational reforms have resulted in structural changes to educational systems with the goal of creating greater efficiency. The process of changing delivery models, content, control and style of teacher professional development is likely to have a profound impact on educational systems, affecting policies, and the management and roles of individuals and organizations. Change theorists and policy experts within education agree that, unlike structural changes, it is difficult to mandate changes that aim to create more effective classroom practices.

Inter-agency collaboration

Systemic change is complex and multi-faceted and frequently leads to resistance and conflict in the work place. Systemic change that involves collaboration between organizations is exponentially more complex than collaboration within an organization. Inter-organizational collaboration is a slow and multi layered process. It can be explained through many lenses and may reflect different theories of organizational renewal and

change, partnerships, networks, institutionalization, inter-personal relationships, social interactions, communication, leadership, empowerment and capacity building.

Most of the research literature suggests that successful inter-agency work requires structural supports, such as designated leaders, stability within the initiating group, long term perspectives, and policies that give a foundation for the work of implementing changes through inter-agency collaboration. Individual factors are also important and include key personal attributes such as personal commitment to collaboration, good communication skills, and ability to establish good working relationships based on trust, and an understanding of how each agency operates.

Chapter 3

Method

This chapter describes the collection and analysis of the data collected from the PDA members. Also included are some reflections on the research process.

Study Design

A qualitative research approach, using individual interviews was used to gather data for this study. The focus of the study was on the PDA, why it developed and how it conducted its work. As I was interested in individual perceptions of these factors it necessitated a qualitative approach to the research.

This investigation aimed to understand how the PDA members worked together from the “actor’s perspective” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 5) or from the interior viewpoint (Flick, 2002) using multiple individual perspectives. It was hoped to reconstruct each participant’s viewpoint and develop an understanding of how a group of individuals reached consensus and what that consensus was, through the “the unfolding of shared situations” (Flick, 2002, p. 25). An interview approach was used to enable detailed analysis of different individual perspectives on the purpose of the PDA, and also look at the ways that PDA members worked together within a multi-agency group. This project provided the opportunity to explore the structures of an inter-organizational group and study its underlying dynamics and present an explanation (Chamberlain, 1999) of the specific strengths and weaknesses of this type of working group.

This approach in this investigation was influenced by current approaches to empirical social research that are categorised by Flick (2002), as representing “a return to the oral”, with a focus on specific concrete problems that are of local and have current

interest. This would enable the study of “systems of knowledge, practices and experiences in the context of those (local) traditions and ways of living in which they are embedded” (Flick, 2002, p. 13).

Sources of Data

Symposium

I attended a symposium organized by the PDA on October 3 and 4, 2002. The symposium was organized to present the model for teacher professional development to key provincial stakeholders within the province. My experience while attending the symposium was a catalyst for this research project. Following those two days I conducted a preliminary review of the literature to develop a broad working framework and developed the proposal for approval by my supervisor and the ethics committee.

Preliminary literature review

The early review of the literature also helped to support the qualitative nature of the inquiry. The questions that were used at this stage emerged from the literature around teacher professional development, policy development, and perspectives on adults as learners.

Interviews

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert that “the more one wishes to acquire unique, non-standardized, personalized information about how individuals view the world, the more one veers towards qualitative open-ended unstructured interviewing” (p. 270).

Semi-structured open-ended interviews were recorded on tape and the text-based transcripts of what participants said during interviews were used to reconstruct individual viewpoints. The interview transcripts were the main data source.

The interview topics were designed to elicit discussion around awareness of how and why the PDA was formed and individual perceptions of the processes that supported or impeded the development of the policy from the perspectives of each individual and agency involved with the Alliance. (See Appendix A for interview topics.)

Participants

A total of eleven individuals agreed to be interviewed for the study. These participants were recruited from the government (N=4), the teachers' association (NLTA) (N=3), the local school district (N=2) and the university (N=2). All eleven participants were members of the PDA and directly involved in the inter-agency work of the committee. Each participant has played a leadership role within organizations connected with education. Some hold positions of influence and authority within their home organizations, while others are accepted as being innovative and authoritative leaders in the field of teacher professional development. However, it is not the purpose of this study to present these individuals as representative of policy makers in general.

Interview process

All committee members were invited to take part in the research process. The time and place of each interview was at the discretion of the committee member. Each participant was advised of the study by a phone call and follow up letter with details of the research

project. Each participant signed a written consent form agreeing to participate in the study and acknowledging that they understood the limited nature of confidentiality due to the small number of participants, prior to their participation in the study. Once written informed consent was received, the interview proceeded. Each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes. At the start, I outlined the basic parameters of the interview, emphasised its semi-structured basis, and I gave details of the broad themes of the enquiry. Following any points of clarification the interview proceeded. All interviews were taped and transcribed.

The topics were used as a broad guide to each conversation. The responses of each interviewee defined the direction and emphasis of the interview, therefore each interview is different in tone and content reflecting the individuality of each person's perceptions.

Public Documents

Texts based on documents published by the committee on behalf of the PDA were used as reference points for the literature review and for developing the interview questions. (See Appendix D for documents published by the PDA.). The PDA had produced various documents that were designed to represent the group's shared perspective on teacher professional development for the symposium held on October 2002. These documents included handouts that accompanied a PowerPoint presentation and other handouts that describe the model for teacher professional development that they were promoting. These documents were studied as part of the process of designing the study and informed the

preliminary literature search. They were used to link the PDA model with current research.

Data analysis

Texts derived from the interviews were used as the main source of data for analysis. Following each interview the tapes were professionally transcribed. I listened to each tape and made corrections to the transcripts where there were typographical errors or misquotations. The final transcripts were printed for detailed and repeated analysis. Two basic forms of data analysis were followed and were complementary.

Inductive approach

This approach followed the traditional principles of grounded theory so that the analysis was “grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 273). Findings emerged “from the data, and not from predetermined hypothesis or formulations” (Chamberlain, 1999, p. 184). The research questions were outlined prior to the interviews and were based on an initial review of previous research. However, *a priori* theoretical knowledge was not used to develop a hypothesis to be tested, although I had developed a ‘pre-understanding of the subject or field under study’ (Flick, 2002, p. 43).

All text-based data derived from interviews were included in this inductive content analysis. I developed a coding scheme based on Chamberlain’s (1999) description of the process:

“In initial coding, raw data are examined and reduced by identifying concepts or categories and their properties. In later stages of the analysis, coding is directed at

identifying more generic and abstract categories, which are developed and integrated into the theory” (p. 187).

The dominant themes that emerged from this inductive data analysis are presented in the following chapter.

Deductive, theory-informed approach

Themes related to the processes of working together as individuals within an inter-agency group, and the process of developing and implementing a new framework for teacher professional development, recurred throughout the texts. To ensure “theoretical sensitivity” (Chamberlain, 1999, p.185), other theoretical constructs derived from an extended literature review were considered (Chamberlain, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). This review focused on the work of Alter and Hage (1993) and considered the relevance of their studies of inter-agency working processes. Also, the model of a learning organization developed by Senge (1990) was one that could be used as a template to organize or provide a theoretical understanding of the perceptions of the study participants.

Reflection on research process

Credibility of knowledge

The group at the centre of this study have worked together as a collaborative multi-agency team as they developed the new model for teacher professional development. They have unique insights into the issues that have arisen during the policy development process. They are a highly credible group of informants in terms of the inquiry, as they have acted in leadership and innovative roles connected with teacher professional

development, within this province over a prolonged period. The use of different perspectives from each participant will add to the credibility of the research findings. This means that if the same themes or similar perspectives are found in the interview transcripts it will promote a sense of convergence or a triangulation between independent measures of the same objective (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

Researcher's role

I took a neutral but open and facilitative role while conducting interviews, without stating any position or preference to the participants. Similar to the experience of other researchers, I faced the problem of 'negotiating proximity and distance in relation to the persons studied' (Flick, 2002, p. 59). My perspective was that of "professional stranger" (Flick, 2002, p. 58), i.e., a visitor or an outsider, but I was able to gain an insider's perspective on the problem through the research process.

In entering the field of research and gaining access to the PDA I was aware of the following problem summarized in Flick (2002); I was entering a specific social system and could have been a disruptive factor for that system.

I recognized that the limits to confidentiality might lead to limited self-exposure by each participant. It was important to try to maintain the anonymity of the participants, although they are members of a small group and their involvement with the PDA is public knowledge but individual respondents have not been named and each person's comments is attributed to a number. Numbers were randomly assigned and do not reflect the order of interviews or membership of any organization. To further preserve a limited

level of anonymity specific references to home organizations or personal working roles have been deleted from the quotes made by each participant.

No comments about the potential usefulness of the research were made to the participants and it is anticipated that no negative consequences will result from the publication of this research. Ultimately my goal was to be fair to the subject under inquiry and to "design methods so open that they do justice to the complexity of the object under study" (Flick, 2002, p. 40).

Ethical considerations

The research proposal was reviewed by the Inter-disciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) at Memorial University. Recommendations made by that committee were included into the research design, and were designed to protect the identity of each participant, improve confidentiality and respect the rights of each participant to be fairly represented.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter details the views of the participants who were interviewed for the study and presents their comments about the foundations of the PDA and its work, and the implementation of the PDA framework. They describe how the committee came together and the roles that members play. Their perspectives on how they developed the model and their understanding of the factors that have supported or may impede its adoption and implementation are illustrated. In the final section I use their quotes to illustrate how elements of their experience of inter-agency work are similar to those that have been identified in the research literature.

Foundations of the PDA

The PDA had its origins in previous strategies that were designed to improve the quality of education through teacher professional development. There was a perception that the desire for improvement and change, over a long period of time, emerged from several directions: from government, from the school districts, from the Faculty of Education at Memorial University, and from the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. Some expressed belief that the PDA initiative has been made in response to all of these agencies and to the needs expressed at a grassroots level by teachers:

Teachers were screaming out for more access to PD days, more access for opportunities to learn, more access for new teaching strategies, and they needed these kinds of initiatives so they could become much more effective teachers. (3)

I like to believe that it's driven by a combination of research and practice, and I don't think it's any one agency that's driving it. We recognize that the past models of the train the trainer and the one-shot in-services have not served us well and have not served the students well. Very clearly, the research literature has

articulated just that. You look at the leadership literature. You look at the change literature. You look at the implementation literature, all of that converges to enable practitioners and researchers to say, we need to get together here in this alliance and we need to move in one direction. (11)

The PDA has been born out of a lengthy evolutionary process that has included committee work, political initiatives and formal reports. Several individuals mentioned their involvement with a provincial advisory committee for teacher professional development that had pre-dated and laid the foundation for the work of the PDA:

The intent of the that committee was to try and flesh out some mechanisms so that the various agencies could work together - to collaborate...for professional development. (3)

In 1995 the Royal Commission's *Our Children Our Future* - there was a recommendation around having a provincial advisory body for PD. That committee wrote a report, and in that report we made several recommendations around how professional development ought to be defined and delivered. It called for a more collegial collaborative approach by the partners. (2)

Many identified the Ministerial Panel report *Supporting Learning* (2000) as the most recent catalyst for establishing the PDA. The authors of this document made a specific recommendation for the formation and direction of a provincial professional development alliance. Several members of the PDA played active roles as contributors to the panel document:

What happened was that our report was presented to the minister because it was advisory, and then it went on to be delivered to the Ministerial Panel. So there was a sequence of events there. And because of the Ministerial Panel the Professional Development Alliance was formed. So I guess you could say that there were a number of us; and if you look at right now, the PD Alliance steering committee, it's a very similar group. There hasn't been a lot of change in that group. A number of us were around since about '95 ... in the pre-stages of this. (2)

Recommendation #47 that says that the Department of Education, school boards and NLTA establish a professional development alliance under a consortium model, and they listed down a number of goals for it. Well, here was my opportunity. Here was my opportunity once again to take a look at the province

as a whole and to take a look at the needs of teachers in terms of PD activities, in-service activities - call it what you will - and try and put together a consortium, as they said here - a consortium model that would involve...all of the leaders in education in terms of determining how we best could satisfy the needs of all teachers in this province. Hence was born the PD Alliance. (3)

Structure of the PDA

The committee is made up of people who have played a leading role, in Newfoundland and Labrador, within the field of teacher education and teacher professional development for several years. The multi-agency membership of the committee laid the foundation for the work that was to come. Each agency within education was invited and accepted the invitation to participate. The process of selection made sense to them. If there were concerns that all stakeholders were not present at the table or if gaps were identified in the membership, they rectified it to ensure that all voices should be heard:

We started in January 2002, I think it is, putting together the individuals in each of the organizations because we wanted Memorial University, we wanted the Faculty of Education involved. We certainly had to have NLTA involved. We certainly had to have the school boards involved. We certainly had to have teacher representatives. We needed to come together - personalities representing each of the educational stakeholders to talk about in the initial stages how we would go about forming the PD Alliance. (3)

The individuals on the committee referred to professional roles and position through their current or previous base of employment or through previous committee work as qualifications for serving on the committee. They see themselves as holding key positions or as playing leaderships roles for professional development within their own organizations:

in 1995 the Royal Commission's Our Children Our Future - there was a recommendation around having a provincial advisory body for PD, and because of my position here, I was appointed to that advisory committee (2)

So I was a member of the committee... as one of the people engaged in the implementation of recommendations of the Ministerial Panel. (10)

I needed to be at the table with the Alliance. So it came about initially as an informal relationship, but more formally as a consequence of the partnership between ---- and the -----. (1)

In addition to roles and position each member of the committee expressed a strong and long-term personal commitment to improving teacher professional development. Most were actively involved in providing direct services for teacher professional development:

I've had a long interest in the topic... I see this as being a natural place for me to contribute. (9)

I also have an extensive background, and that gives me some knowledge that was useful to the members. (1)

Some members have made a conscious decision to get involved with initiatives, that allow them to extend their network of professional contacts and extend their sphere of knowledge as part of their own professional development:

For many years, I've been involved in providing professional development, supporting professional development for teachers in several capacities; and it's something that's personally a commitment of mine. So whenever I could get myself involved in things that are going to be supportive of professional development opportunities for teachers, I sought them out. (4)

As a group they represent the key provincial organizations connected to education. As individuals they present as having a high level of knowledge and commitment to the principles of school improvement through teacher growth and ongoing professional development. Also there was a strong recognition of the positive contribution that each of the other members could make to the work of the committee:

All of the partners that are there have a key stake in the professional development of teachers as it relates to student learning. (11)

I think that people are committed to this. I think the people want to see it happen. The individuals that sit at that table - I don't think there's anybody there that's not committed to the concept and who has not struggled with this over the years. (9)

Developing the work of the PDA

The work of the earlier committee on teacher professional development and the Ministerial Panel for *Supporting Learning* laid a good foundation for the development of the PDA as the issues had been clarified and the goals and purpose of the committee were well defined:

There were a lot of really difficult issues that the other committee dealt with – you know, the precursors of... to the PD Alliance - that enabled this one to move to get very quickly beyond that. (5)

The committee began their work by establishing a common philosophy and sense of purpose:

We had belief statements there that were guiding us like philosophical underpinnings to where our new framework should take us, and then we also had guiding principles that came from the belief statements which were also helpful in directing us in our thinking with respect to what the new framework for the new PD Alliance would look like; and so we spent a long time examining these. (3)

It was important to the committee that their work was grounded in a solid foundation of evidence derived from current research. Some members had already conducted extensive research in this field and that may have established a starting point for their work. There was a strong sense that the committee wanted to take an open look at all the options available:

We wanted firstly to see what research says about professional development activities, and [named person] was instrumental in this. He had already put together position papers with respect to the research. (3)

We were very careful to ensure that it did have that legitimacy in research...good professional development and we wanted to present an expanded view of good professional development. (7)

Instead of looking at any particular person or research or theory, we took the best of what we knew from all of those committee reports, task force reports that had been done over the years. We relied on best practice and I guess we drew from all of that to create what we have. (4)

The process of developing the model meant that they had to debate and discuss all the issues openly. Most people perceived this as a necessary and positive part of the process, “it's a matter of trying to work a way through it”. (9)

I have seen a tremendous, long discussion about the ins and outs of both professional development and what are best practices, and then what it is we are up to individually; and you have to have those understandings first before you can move forward common objectives and common things. (3)

There was a perception that they had to develop their own way of making sense and proceeding:

The first two or three meetings were a collection of storming, and perhaps norming...looking... trying to find one's way forward and to provide some sort of a road map...(3)

In general, there was a high level of awareness of the need for building a sense of common purpose and connection with the committee: “I find all these people that I speak to - we are all on the same wavelength”. (1)

Developing the model for teacher professional development

Although the PDA was formed as direct result of the Ministerial Panel report *Supporting Learning* (2000), the committee members did not limit its work to the parameters outlined within the report's recommendations. The committee as a group took the recommendations made in that report and then refined and developed those ideas further:

I think it has allowed its mandate to evolve. In making the recommendation, of course, the Sparkes/Williams group didn't specify what they should be doing long term and that is to their credit because that allows the organization then to seek its own way and to find its way based on... we'll call it market factors - but the needs

that are out there in the system. But I don't think it's exceeded that. I do think it has defined itself more precisely than the recommendation suggested it. (8)

There was a strong sense of commitment to and satisfaction with the model that the PDA developed. The model for teacher professional development was perceived as comprehensive, coherent with current research findings around effective ongoing teacher professional development models and connected with goals of improving student performance. The model was perceived as meeting the varied needs of the teacher population of Newfoundland and Labrador while reflecting current demographic changes:

It's... it's not an event or even a series of events. It's a process that we seek to put in place that's viable and that is flexible enough to accommodate change to reflect declining enrolment, to reflect our geography, to reflect fiscal realities and so on, yet be fundamentally of value to...all educators in our province. (3)

Intrinsic to the model is the concept of teachers as active, empowered professionals who are enabled to make decisions about their own professional development:

When we put the framework together, we had a number of visual representations of the ideas and we finally decided that, after reflecting upon the principles and research, we would put the educators at the centre of the framework because this is really what we wanted. (3)

It's about time that we started treating ourselves, and each other, as professionals... but as individuals as well... you reap the benefits. (2)

It's about improving education, but that's not going to happen until teachers make their own choices. (1)

Through developing the model the members of the PDA have had to become aware of the research in the field and educators have had their perspective of teacher professional development broadened:

I think that provincially we have much more of a common understanding of what professional development is. (7)

PDA model and policy development

The impact of the PDA model in relation to policy and policy development was discussed. Many felt that it was not a policy nor should it become a policy because that would undermine the intrinsic dynamic nature of the goals of the PDA. However it was believed that adoption of the model by each of the organizational members would lead to policy changes and policy development:

In a broad context of policy development, I think it's an example of a modern approach to policy- perhaps I should say post-modern approach. In the final analysis, what you will have is a new policy framework surrounding professional development in this province because it will certainly impact the policies, it won't dictate the policy, but it will define the policy. (11)

I don't think I see it as policy. It might be a policy for a district but I don't think it can be a policy for all of the agencies. (1)

There is a sense that if the model is adopted it will have a strong impact within each organization that could result in policy change or the development, adoption and implementation of new policies. The need for coherence with existing policies and regulations was noted:

It's not a matter of a policy but it's a matter of many policies. For example, teacher evaluation policy...has to be coherent in this model of professional development. There are many policies that will have to be examined and looked at if you're going to be responsible for implementing such an approach. (9)

We will see greater coherence to... to the policies because they will have been vetted by and informed by that collective group...the actual model itself may indeed become what we would call policy, but only in the sense in which it is implemented by the various partners. (10)

One person was strongly concerned about the possible negative impact of having the work of the PDA embedded in what were perceived as potentially negative bureaucratic procedures:

I think it will evolve to having policy statements with respect to the direction that it takes. It becomes imbedded in policy, then in my estimation, it brings with it some other issues - one of bureaucracy...I would prefer that the PD Alliance Committee be the committee that continues to reflect upon its growth, that continues to reflect upon new areas for expansion, that continues to reflect upon its beliefs and its principles and, through that reflective process, is always at a stage of expanding of looking new ideas, such that it becomes a dynamic alliance rather than a static one that possibly could come about through policies. (3)

A few people asserted that the model needed to be supported by province-wide policies or even legislation to be able to access the resources within each organization that would be necessary for success over the longer term:

I would suggest its primary mandate is not policy development. Its primary mandate is to address the cohesion of professional development in the province. Try to bring some type of an umbrella scope to what's being offered and how it's being offered; but in doing so, it has to address policy. (8)

Right now, it's a model. It's a perceived way of doing things that we are putting forward. For it to have any authority, maybe that's where it has to be - it has to be a policy... It has to be something more umbrella-like and the biggest umbrella for education is the Schools' Act or legislation around education and that's where it would have to be, or collective agreement, which has all the parties involved in it. (2)

The idea of mandating change of this nature through legislation or regulations was rejected by others who noted that when changes are imposed on the system often people will find ways to circumvent or sabotage top down directives through non-compliance:

It's mandated. All right. So it's mandated. How do I circumvent it? And we do! We'll find a way that it won't happen unless we want it to happen. (11)

Implementation of the PDA Model

Most members felt that the types of changes proposed by the PDA cannot be mandated or imposed in a top down manner and such an approach would possibly undermine the intrinsic collegial empowerment philosophy embedded within the model. There was a wide acknowledgement that due to the complexity of the task that the PDA has taken on that successful implementation will require a high level of commitment from all the partners. In general there was recognition of a shared high level of commitment:

We've got growing pains, it's just not easy to implement. This is a pretty ambitious sort of move and it's going to take a while; but I think there's a lot of commitment from a lot of people to it. (9)

Despite the commitment and sincerity of each committee member there was recognition of the limits to what each can do:

We all work within certain parameters and limits to what we can do and what we can achieve and that impacts upon how much movement can take place on our concepts and ideas. (7)

Authority of the PDA

Most agreed that the PDA does have a certain amount of authority invested in it through reference to the Ministerial Panel and the power of Government to impose regulations and policies:

It has authority to the degree that all other recommendations of the Sparkes/Williams Report have the authority. This report was initiated to give new direction to the total educational process in the province, and Recommendation 47 then carries with it the same authority as the recommendation having to do with the staffing regulations in the province. Government accepted the report. So the recommendation having to do with the PD Alliance is part of that reform process; and consequently, it carries with it the same strength of authority, the same importance as all the other recommendations would in the Sparkes/Williams Report. (3)

For others, the authority of the PDA is embedded within each of the agencies involved:

We're developing an action plan now where we can solidify our authority a little bit more. Each member comes with the authority and the voice from the group that they represent. (4)

I think it's sufficient for us to understand that we each have authority in our respective jurisdictions and that, acting together, any one group can be so much better, having been informed by the larger partnership. (10)

There was a strong sense among some committee members that the PDA did not have authority, and some saw that a weakness of the committee was its ability to promote the implementation of the model, but there was not a strong consensus around this issue, "I'm not sure that any one of them is ready to say, we're going to form a little United Nations here." (6)

Right now, it's... there's a lot of goodwill and desire and personal commitment, but it needs to be built upon in terms of legislation and policy and formal commitments of departments. (4)

I guess the PD Alliance can fall apart tomorrow. It's a very fragile thing but, you know, we certainly sense - all of us around the table - that there is a really good will and a desire to make this thing work, but it is not a governing body. It does not have any authority of any sort. (6)

Well in order for the system to change some things have to be mandated...also in terms of authority I mean there's nothing there in terms of legislation or entrenched policy within any of the organizations and certainly not within government that would give the PD alliance any kind of legitimacy as such. (7)

Authority - what really represents authority is usually if you can say, we are going to do something, knowing that you have the ability to deliver on it, you know. Right now, all we can do is make recommendations for things and hope. (2)

Some group members expressed strong beliefs and insisted that it would not be appropriate for the PDA to mandate or impose the model on any of the agencies involved in education, as this would undermine the fundamental philosophical basis of the alliance, "It depends on good will... I think it has only moral authority." (1). Through open

discussion and consensus building the PDA work would be based on a stronger foundation:

The group is really all about collaboration and so rather than getting into mandating, what the group has actually already begun is working with school boards and other agencies to try and sell the model and to get a buy-in for the model. (5)

It gives me trouble actually because while the Alliance must have a mandate, I don't think it should have authority to dictate anything. It's a mandate to draw all the players together. (11)

It has to build a collective vision, it has to get buy-in from all the stakeholders in the system...So if it had a definitive, authoritative mandate, perhaps that might get in the way of some of that stuff because in trying to define the vision, you have to do a lot of talking, a lot of dialogue and get a lot of buy-in and out of that will probably emerge a pretty solid mandate - a consensus mandate. (8)

Implementation process

There were different perspectives on the best approaches to support the implementation of the PDA model. In general, the processes involved in collaboration and dialogue were perceived as core constructs of the work of the PDA and these should be reflected in the ways that the model is implemented:

It just requires us to have a good engagement for discussions on the issues...we do this in an atmosphere of collegiality and collaboration and exchange on the kinds of processes that we need to be able to bring change about in this province. (3)

For this person too much discussion and debate initially were sources of frustration:

You have some people on the committee who are action oriented and are ready for things to happen and many of these people myself included have been sitting at tables for ten years talking about professional development...so you've got that group ready for action then you've got another group who are satisfied at the moment to spend a great deal of time operating in the conceptual metaphysical realms and so on and spend a day talking about ideas and principles so there has been a conflict there. (7)

Others were more optimistic about the longer-term process of implementation. Some accepted that the process is complex and there is a need to acknowledge openly that there will be problems:

We have to be patient and supportive as people move forward, knowing that we're going to make mistakes and sometimes we're going to do things that are totally inconsistent, but we should look at that as learning opportunities and not failures. It's an opportunity for us to talk about how could we do it differently...so we'll have little implementation dips as we go; but hopefully, if we can solidify some understanding around core principles and beliefs, we can gradually move. (4)

Pace of change

There were divergent views around the pace of implementation. Some agreed that the pace of change will vary within different organizations, "I don't think all people are going to be at the same place at the same time" (10). The pace of change for some was frustrating and too slow, but they recognized that for the overall good of the model, they had to accept that every section of each agency was not equally conscious of the benefits of the model for them:

I think there's varying degrees of comfort. In some ways, I feel, we haven't moved fast enough and I get a sense of impatience that we have to talk through so much and like I appreciate that we have to build support and comfort for the way we're going...but others in the province are still trying to get their head around what it means for them, right, and they haven't perhaps even acted on the model yet. So there's a number of us who are at different points along the way. (4)

There has to be room for variation. I think that there needs to be some kind of movement that's fairly consistent or fairly common. If someone falls too far behind... I think the whole thing would be weakened. (2)

Another person asserted that for meaningful systemic change to take place there needs to be long-term planning so that people are prepared, and ready to accept and implement the model:

If there is a philosophical shift coming, then you would alert the system that there's a major change happening in two years. So, that allows people time in the system to realize that change is coming, so therefore I need to prepare for that change. Then in the two-year block leading up to the implementation, more of a focus on building and buy-in and building a consensus, building understanding and knowledge what that change means for teacher practice, for student practice for the types of resources that are going to be used in the classroom. So while you still have your old programs in place, you can gradually make that shift to the direction that the new program is taking. (8)

Others expressed impatience with a gradual approach and stated that it would increase the chances of failure:

Don't go incrementally. Go big. It's easy to go incrementally, easy to silence it. It's easy to hide it. It's just easy for it not to be shown. Do it big. Write it large. Say this is the PD Alliance and this is what we're doing. It is my view that unless you can put something out there that's very concrete - this is what we're working at - and have some success very quickly - that's what the literature shows...you need success. (1)

In general, there was an awareness of the inherent contradiction within the need for credibility derived from early visible and successful implementation of the model and the need to build capacity that will sustain the model over the longer term:

So we're caught, I suppose, as an alliance, between the desire to... to show progress and to show early success ...but I guess a worry that I have is that we will move into bits and pieces of... of actions without a clear a long term direction that's sustainable; and for that to happen, we have to have long term commitment to a framework and to a set of directions. (10)

Presenting the model

There was strong agreement about the purpose of the symposium that was organized in October 2002 to present the model. It symbolized a willingness to commit publicly to supporting the model by each organization that was represented on the committee. For the most part they were anxious to state that the purpose was not to impose the new model in a top down manner, as they were sensitive to the literature around change

management. They also wished to reflect the collaborative and collegial philosophical foundations of the model in how it was presented. The symposium was also a test of the model that they were developing and provided a way to get direct feedback from the potential users of the model:

Well, the purpose of the symposium was to launch the model to provide participants with the basis, the theoretical underpinnings of the model to get feedback on the model to determine whether or not there were things we had missed...and get feedback on how the various organizations saw the model impacting on their work. (5)

The goal was “not to sell the model” (11) but to share it and have a discussion that would inform the future development of the work of the PDA and “...so the real intent there was to sort of introduce it and get feedback and get reaction and then get endorsements.”(9). In other words:

We felt that it was important to bring together as many of the decision makers as possible from the various organizations... to really get some honest feedback on our model, to initiate some discussion and dialogue about key components of the model such as choice, recognition for PD and those sort of things and to give the organisations an opportunity to speak to one another about what that meant to them in terms of collaboration and also to give them an opportunity to dialogue internally amongst themselves as to what this could possibly mean to them and to give them the opportunity to develop some action plans and then make recommendations to the PD Alliance about how we could move forward. (7)

By engaging in a process of dialogue with leaders in each of these organizations there was hope that this would facilitate a sense of ownership towards the work of the committee:

The purpose primarily was to get feedback from some of the leaders out there in the various organizations. That's first and foremost. But, secondly, it was to make sure that we bring these people into the process as early as possible so we cannot just get feedback, but develop some sense of ownership. (6)

The impact of the symposium

The discussion around the impact of the symposium was an area where there was some divergence of opinion between each of the people interviewed. Most perceived the symposium as a very positive event that was exciting in scale and scope:

I don't think that I've ever been at anything in this province where all the agencies were represented with so many people, with so many different kinds of talents, backgrounds, opinions, values and a convergence around the goals - and I think people are really grabbed and are passionate about the idea that teachers are professionals and therefore should choose. (8)

The positive feedback from the audience at the symposium had a strong reinforcing effect on members of the committee and helped them clarify the position that they should be taking:

I think a lot of progress was made and I think because we had that clear in-depth discussion of the various components of the model that we had developed to that point in time, I think we are in a better... in better shape with the understanding that's out there among... particularly school districts. (10)

It provided a means for the committee members to focus on a specific event and be seen to take some action and was a means for those who wish to put pressure on each of the other organizations to begin the change process:

I guess it was a launching event. So it was to build some kind of momentum. That would've been a big piece. It also acted for us as a catalyst... there comes a point when you have to be seen doing something...you can put as many nice words on paper as you want. So the symposium was a chance for us to test the waters a bit and see from the practical side of things...so it's beginning to happen. It's being moved forward; and with a lot more of support and specific direction on some particular issues...engagement and conversations and pressure to say to them, you know, this is what you said you were going to do, now where are you with that? That kind of accountability - subtle accountability - starts to move new ideas forward; and this is a new idea. It's a new concept and, you know, there was some hesitation about it. There was some ambivalence about it, but I think that's beginning to disappear now. (3)

There was some concern about the follow up to the symposium, “the follow-up, I think, has been abysmal...I think the group has to take some ownership for what's happened there.” (8) For some the aftermath has had a negative impact on the work of the committee. This was the main area for potential future conflict within the committee that was expressed throughout the interviews:

We managed to get people kind of onside and some of that cynicism was somewhat diminished; but it can easily set in again if we don't get some results and get things... something moving rather quickly. (6)

Others felt that the work that they had completed would be undermined if they continued to be inactive or they were perceived as being inactive, especially after the impact of the symposium:

Well, I think the literature does show you have to show quick success. So anyhow, I think we missed the opportunity and I just don't know how we're going to get back to getting all that energy focused back on that idea. (1)

I like what we have, but I think that there's been an awful lot of concern expressed in the last six months that if we don't do something soon... we had a launch in October. We've had feedback. Now people should soon be coming to us to say, now what; and when they do, we don't have anything. So that's going to be scary. (2)

Vision of the impact of the PDA model

Teaching and learning

For most interviewees their sense of the importance of their work was reflected in the belief that a fundamental benefit will be that its direct impact on classroom practice would be greater than previous reforms that were derived from legislation or external mandates:

Now that we got it off and running and sometimes it goes in fits and starts, but once we get the implementation plan in place; and once we get the districts carrying through on their commitment, I think we're going to see a very

significant change in education because we haven't seen a significant change in education...we've seen some reform, but we haven't seen a lot of change at the classroom level...When it doesn't happen in the classroom, it doesn't happen; and I think it will happen if teachers can take a look at what they need.(3)

The main impact is going to be that we have better teaching and learning for students in the classroom. I think we'll have supported teachers who can support students. We're modeling best practices that we should see in evidence in the classroom. (4)

Dramatic. Dramatic... I've looked at trends in education, trends in professional development and it's been a passion of mine to re-professionalize teachers... I think we'll bring meaningful change that will make a great deal of difference to student learning. (11)

I see it as the most exciting thing that has come in education during my whole career. I'm twenty-three or four years in now and I see it as having great potential for change. (4)

Teacher professionalism

It was asserted by several people that the PDA model, if implemented, is likely to have a positive impact on teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, which they believe will benefit the entire system of education, and ultimately, the performance of students in schools. One person stated that teachers would have a stronger sense of professionalism, "...the impact over time would be the coming of age and teaching as a profession" (1). Others reiterated the same point:

We always see ourselves as professionals, but we haven't always treated ourselves as professionals. So I think that will be one of the outcomes of this and I can't help but think that that will be positive. (5)

One effect of the PDA model would be to increase the range of options and the quality and quantity of the learning that takes place by engaging the teacher in making choices within the ongoing process of professional development:

I think it will have profound effects on teachers. If it's carried through to a point where teachers have access to multiple sources of professional development

created and supported by the inter-agency relationship, then the quality of the PD experience should climb because of the resources that are coming into it. The volume of PD opportunities should increase at the recipient level, at the user level, the teacher level. If there are more choices available, then the teacher will be in a better position to identify through self-analysis what their own PD needs are to improve themselves as professionals and then go out and seek that. So the net impact at the classroom level should be significant in the long term. When you move away from a model where PD is done to you and you participate in PD in a new model by choice, based upon need, and professional understanding of what that need is, I think that can have tremendous positive impact on the system. (8)

The connection between teacher professionalism and the positive impact of the PDA model on that, through involving the teachers in identifying their own needs and making informed choices, was strongly articulated by many respondents. However, there was recognition of the possible tensions and anxiety around changes that adoption of the model may cause:

People would have to let go a lot more control than we actually are given now over our system, and that takes a big leap in faith, you know. So it's trust in the fact that teachers can and the willingness to let go and to re-frame ourselves. (1)

The nature of teacher professional development will change from a top down expert led model to a more democratic participatory approach. Oh, there's a definite shift and the shift is from a traditional top down model to a decentralized democratic model where the system and individuals within the system actually drive the PD initiatives. (8)

There was a wide recognition that changes of this nature are complicated and difficult to implement. This is especially true, as traditional practices in teacher professional development have not supported the empowerment of teachers to enable them to make responsible professional decisions:

We have not had a history of the teacher as the professional and the teacher knows what they need to learn and the system needs to respond to what they ask for. We have a culture of, we'll tell the teachers what they need and, you know, a lot of us who are involved in the Alliance have lived through that old model of what are we going to provide for teachers. We need to challenge our old ways of doing things with the new model that we're trying to advance; I suppose, that

we're into organizational learning, we've all got to challenge our mental models and hopefully find new ways to work together. (4)

There was strong consensus about the new model and its predicted positive impact on teachers and learners, that was reflected in the overall optimistic tone to the musings around future perspectives:

“This is the way the research tells us it should move and our own experiences tell us it should move, and I think it will flourish”. (9)

“The greatest benefit that I hope will come out of the PD Alliance is the consistent effort toward building learning communities.” (10)

Organizational change

Most participants recognised that while organizational change is difficult to implement, and support over the longer term (cf. Fullan, 2001), it is an essential component of the PDA initiative:

Implementation is always messy. (9)

This model is bringing about institutional change and cultural change and cultural change and institutional change are the two biggies. So changing the two of those are the most significant. That's not going to happen overnight. We will see pockets of change within the system that hopefully will create a synergy and growth as the whole system changes, but you won't see wholesale change in the province. So that's going to be the biggest obstacle - sustaining ourselves while that cultural and institutional change takes place. (8)

Others noted that there would be changes within and between each of the organizations involved with the PDA at the organizational and individual levels:

“I think it should also blur the lines a lot between the different agencies” (2).

Most members had a high level of sensitivity about the unique nature of the way that the committee was working together within the current education culture. They

recognised that the complexity and difficulties of the work are related to the inter-agency model but some benefits could arise from this complex process as well:

We recognized that right from the beginning and we're saying, look, if we can work more effectively together, if we can put together a model that works for all of us and that model being a model of professional development for teachers, we all buy into it. We all get behind it. We all push it. Then it's got to have, you know, an impact on the goal, and that goal being student learning. (6)

Some, although enthusiastic about the work of the PDA, also expressed caution about the ability of the PDA to deliver, "it's a fragile organization that we've put together"(6) and expressed concerns that too high expectations could have a negative impact:

I'm excited about the potential; I'm excited about the possibilities, but if anyone believes that it's an unbreakable Alliance or that things are perfect, then that's not... that's not where it is today and that's not where it's going to be next year this time, and I just hope that we don't get so preoccupied with saying...you have not produced enough results. (10)

Several individuals expressed beliefs that while the change process was slower and much more complex, there were benefits to be gained from actually engaging in that process within an inter-agency model:

It makes it much slower. It's costly to bring people together, and the people that are at the table are busy people and it's difficult to schedule meetings and so on. It's very time consuming. It slows the final product. In the long run, however, it's more effective...It's change in a way... in the way we do business; and as we get together and link in our multi-agency model, changes... the changes are occurring as a matter of process, and change is a process. (11)

Inter-agency processes in a learning organization

In this section factors specific to the inter-agency process will be illustrated. These results will be presented in a format that is informed by the research referenced earlier (Alter & Hage, 1993; Boyd & Croyson, 2001; Cordiero & Loup, 1997; Lipnack & Stamps, 1995). Individual and organizational factors that tend to support or act as barriers to the

development and implementation of inter-agency collaboration will be highlighted. Organizations and individuals that become involved in successful collaborative work share many features such as flexibility of thinking and behaviour, clearly developed goals and awareness of the systemic impact of changing how organizations work together (Alter & Hage, 1993; Kemeny & Yanowitz, 2000). These factors are similar to those observed by Senge (1990) as elements of the learning organization.

Senge (1990) described members of learning organizations as having a high degree of competence and personal mastery, having the ability to develop new mental models, being involved in constructing a shared vision, being engaged in team learning, and having an awareness of systemic issues when implementing change. These features of a learning organization were explicitly referenced in many of the comments of the participants, and could be inferred from others:

So building learning communities inside every organization represented at that table ought to be our longest-term goal. That's not easily accomplished; and if we become so focused on one little piece, we might lose that larger attempt to build the learning communities. (3)

The following sections consider the features identified by Senge (1990) in more detail.

Personal mastery

The concept of personal mastery within the context of the learning organization as described by Senge, Klein, Roberts, Ross and Smith (1994) reflects the development of both intra-personal and inter-personal skills. The goal is “not only to increase their own capabilities, but to improve the capabilities of the other people around them. There is the recognition that an organization develops along with its people” (p. 193). The focus of

the PDA on the professional development model is founded on personal choices that are made to work towards organizational goals:

It's not easy to maintain a culture of learning, but I think that's what we have. I think schools as learning organizations is really important, and that's all part of what we're trying to do ... make it rest on teachers being professional ... aware of their learning needs ... and creating that [learning] culture. (9)

In looking at the PDA as a learning organization members made comments that illuminated their beliefs about personal mastery in the sense that they perceived members as having certain qualities:

The people who serve on the PD Alliance on that committee obviously were there because we do have a fair bit of expertise and background in professional development, and without sounding too arrogant the people there are somewhat visionary. (7)

We have a lot of good, competent, caring, committed people and when we sit around the table there's no tensions ... I think that's remarkable. (9)

Mental Models

Senge et al. (1994) noted that working through the disciplinary processes implicit in developing mental models may seem to be mainly an intellectual exercise but he asserts that by sharing and challenging each other's ideas and struggling through the process as a team, this process has a powerful impact. The responses of the group in describing how they developed the PDA model illustrate their recognition of the need for dialogue and their understanding of the processes involved in developing new mental models.

They described how they were challenged by and challenged each other's mental models in the developmental phase of the PDA framework. Most recognised that each individual on the committee needed to be flexible in developing new ways of thinking about professional development:

When you get different organizations together in the same room and you have a common goal, I guess, but you probably have been going about it differently throughout the years, it's amazing what can happen when you get these people together in one room – creative thoughts that can flow out of that - we all have our own angle of things and so you sit these people down and you start talking and, you know, you see the little differences but, more than anything, you see the commonalities as well when you do that. (6)

We've had to challenge our thinking and probably had two or three years of doing this which puts us in a different place than others. (4)

Despite relatively long term working relationships there was still a lack of understanding of how each organization works:

The difficulty is always a lack of understanding of the other agencies - not knowing the inside of how other agencies work. (11)

Different mental models for implementation emerged and it seemed that there was less clarity around the goals related to this aspect of the process. Some of this could have been related to lack of understanding how each organization would approach implementation.

Shared vision

The participants described how they as a committee, as distinct from the broader education system, developed a shared vision within their own group:

Everybody looked at it from their vantage point and that made the model reflect the whole rather than only pieces of it. (9)

The process that they described in the development stage suggests that they co-created their shared vision. Senge et al (1994) describe co-creation as the fifth stage and highest level of shared vision creating in which “the ‘boss’ and ‘members’ of the organization through a collaborative process build a shared vision together” (p. 314).

Through the process of developing the model, positive working relationships developed and a strong sense of shared vision and common goals was expressed:

We're trying to build momentum around principles and beliefs. [The purpose of the work was to show] an awareness of our emerging ideas and changing models of teacher professional development. (4)

The continuity of the membership of the committee supported the development of mutual trust, mutual respect and the freedom to communicate openly to establish common goals:

You realize quickly we're all on the same page...we all want to deliver quality educational programs to our students. And once you establish what the overarching goal is, it's very easy to work backwards from there and ask, what do I have to do to make it fit? Where do we all need to bend to be flexible? Where are the areas of commonalities and so on? So one of the keys to working within multi-agency group is establishing very quickly what your common goal is; and we did that. We all did that very, very quickly. (6)

In implementing the framework that they developed the participants used various strategies. The symposium (October 3-4, 2002) provided an opportunity for the PDA to implement both the context of the shared vision and also to model the same processes that were utilized in its implementation. Senge et al. (1994) has described four other possible strategies for implementing a shared vision in addition to the co-creation process described earlier. These are as follows:

1. Telling: the 'boss' knows what the vision should be and the organization is going to have to follow it;
2. Selling: the 'boss' knows what the vision should be but needs the organization to 'buy-in' before proceeding;
3. Testing: the 'boss' has an idea of what the vision should be or several ideas, and wants to know the organization's reactions before proceeding;

4. Consulting: the ‘boss’ is putting together a vision and wants creative input from the organization before proceeding (see Senge et al., 1994, p. 314)

During the symposium the ‘boss’ could be interpreted as the steering committee. The processes for communicating the shared vision incorporated some aspects of Senge’s model. In this case the steering committee was clearly selling an idea and looking for ‘buy-in’ from the membership of each organization. They also explicitly used several consultative processes for testing the vision. They invited and accepted critical and creative input from symposium participants. In practical terms this approach reflects what they believed was possible, given the logistical complexities of initiating dialogue within an inter-agency framework at the early stages.

All the important messages from the symposium were delivered implicitly through this process. While the PDA model was developed by a group of educational leaders in the field, the longer-term implementation strategy would not be a ‘telling’ process from the top down. Rather teachers would be positioned to co-create, make personal choices and “draw forth aspects of their personal vision” (Senge et al., 1994, p. 322). The symposium was designed:

to bring an awareness of our emerging ideas, to include people that were in a position to make decisions, so that we could have a debate about the underpinnings of the model ... and emerge with a model that people would, in a preliminary fashion, be willing to endorse. (11)

Team learning

Team learning is based on the premise that through open dialogue processes the team members learn to think together (Senge et al., 1994). The purpose of dialogue is to “create a setting where conscious *collective mindfulness* could be maintained” (p. 359).

The PDA were able to trust each other enough to have open dialogue and to develop ideas. They were able to demonstrate the ability to problem solve from individual and collective perspectives – this is a concept central to building a learning organization.

The comments of the participants in the study reflect a high level of mindfulness and personal insight into the need for skilful discussion and dialogue. There was some evidence that at times some team members did not want to offend others. However, in general, each person stated clearly that s/he felt that it was safe to disagree, debate and dialogue freely. During the symposium they made it possible for all participants to discuss the “undiscussables” (Senge et al., 1994, p. 404). Feedback from individuals and small group sessions was posted on the walls. In one example, by facilitating open responses from the participants at the symposium they were able to learn of the concern and anxiety that was felt over the concept of ‘teacher choice’ that was presented as being at the core of the model and were able to clarify their understanding of the concept.

As the group members moved through the process it was evident that they began to identify with the group as well as with the home organization. Some important factors were noted as contributing to the process of positive team learning from the start.

When we sit around the table, I think we engage as a group of colleagues and we express freely our views about the implications for the other agencies as well. So I see myself very much a member of the team - able to comment and be part of any discussion. (9)

However, I do sense that there's a firm commitment to collaboration aimed at ensuring that the PD Alliance succeeds in the long term, and the consequence of that collaboration in that direction is that they've... each partner seems unwilling to push its own political agenda in the interest of making the PD Alliance work. (8)

Team learning was linked to the high level of personal commitment of each member to the common goal and shared vision that has evolved through working together. This combined individual-collective approach at the personal and individual levels enabled the development of a higher-level concept of teacher professional development:

I believe what every partner did bring to the initial meeting, and has brought to every meeting since, is a commitment to do the very best that he or she can and their represented agencies can for the children of this province. So that's what keeps the partners at the table - to know we're small; we have many things going against us: geography, demographics, etc., so we must put our best foot forward. So there is recognition that working apart is not as good as working together. (3)

Because the members at the table have worked together on various fronts and we have worked together and we fought together professionally and so on over the years, so there's a healthy respect for each other, which allows for all kinds of arguments to accrue at any particular point in time, but they are not personal. (10)

Systems thinking

Each system “is a perceived whole whose elements ‘hang together’ because they continually affect each other over time and operate toward a common purpose” (Senge et al., 1994, p. 90). Systemic approaches lay the foundations for the establishment of a learning organization. The PDA has used a systemic approach in terms of its awareness of the expressed need to have all the significant players at the discussion table and in the processes described to reach consensus on the model.

Most of the respondents showed a high level of awareness of the difficulty of implementing changes within any system. The challenge of introducing change through an inter-agency model was recognised as a challenge to each individual and the home organization:

Now they have to work through and with other people and I think there's lots of willingness to do it, but it's thinking and working together before you act. Like you may fall into the old trap of doing the way you always did without saying, well, now how does the Professional Development Alliance's new model affect the way we're doing things here. (4)

There was recognition that part of the process of working in an inter-agency committee would be a need for flexibility and an ability to compromise in order to reach consensus and achieve their common goals:

We all have to give a little bit here if we want to see this work... There's going to have to be some bending and flexing and so on because what may be good for the school district sometimes may not be so good for the Department of Education and vice versa. (6)

There's aspects of giving up some of your territory, of compromising. ... I think if you look at the individuals who are there right now... we're probably very, very willing to give up some of our territory if we thought that it would, you know, result in positive change. (7)

Ultimately, there was a sense that this was the only future viable option for all the parties involved:

But that degree of change and having to, as one particular agency, let go of some things for the greater good is not easily accomplished, but I think we've made an admirable beginning and perhaps we have done so, because not doing so is not an option anymore. (10)

Implementation of an inter-agency model

The members of the committee came together with a moderate level of understanding of each other's positions. As they worked together they were forced to clarify and challenge existing mental models about professional teacher development in the province. In doing so the members began to step beyond intra-organizational constructs and to develop an integrated inter-agency model of professional development.

Much of the research literature (Alter & Hage, 1993; Cordiero & Loup, 1997, 1996; Lipnack & Stamps, 1995) suggests factors specific to inter-agency collaborative work need to be considered when evaluating the likely success or failure of such enterprises. For example, the individuals involved in this work need to be highly committed and able to practice boundary-spanning behaviours. Boundary spanners are those individuals who can collaborate, create partnerships, and communicate well across and between groups and organizations (Johnson & Galvin, 1997; Lipnack & Stamps, 1995). Some structural supports have been identified as helpful to inter-agency collaboration. For example, the process of successful inter-agency work is fraught with pitfalls especially if there is a lack of awareness of the potential for conflict. Alter and Hage (1995) assert that conflict is a core element of this type of work. However, there is also potential for a lack of progress due to unwillingness by some group members to offend or contradict other group members, a situation described by Harvey (1998) in his book, "The Abilene Paradox".

Analysis of the interviews revealed a high level of congruence between the comments of the PDA members and elements of successful inter-agency collaboration. These elements for success and some potential barriers to the implementation of the PDA were identified and are discussed below.

Inter-Agency Process

Development of working relationships

Different types of relationships have developed between the participants in the committee through their work over a number of years. Members can make personal contact easily across organizations with relative ease:

This is an instance where it's not adversarial and the players have common goals, understandings and so on...the players at the table now - there's a certain chemistry that exists amongst them and there's a real good will amongst the members sitting around that table and, you know, you change a couple of players, maybe the dynamic could change. So the longer the current players stay there, I think, you know, it provides for continuity (6)

Boundaries between each organization are perceived as low:

It is relatively easy for committee members to have access and talk to each other regardless of their position within each organization. That doesn't mean that we're overly familiar with each other, but the culture of the province allows one to make personal contact. You don't have that rigid enforcement of protocol and the bureaucracy. (8)

Although relationship building was not expressed as an explicit goal of the collaboration most participants in the study mentioned it; it was also noted as an important outcome:

It's not that these relationships existed prior to the professional contact, most of it has been developed because of professional contact through committees and so on. (9)

Mostly these are professional and collegial relationships and in some cases they have developed into friendships. Some people found that while it was a positive experience to work with friends there were some pressures associated with it as well:

There's togetherness in this as well, but that puts on extra pressures because you don't want to let your friends down. You know, if your friends are sitting around the table ...there is often a subtle pressure and sometimes not too subtle - because your friends don't mind telling you that, you know, you were supposed to get this completed and you didn't do it; but there is a much more of a pressure, I guess - and it might be just individual pressure you put on yourself - you have this kind of expectation for yourself that you don't want to let your group down. (3)

Awareness of potential for conflict

The potential for conflict was recognised by most who noted awareness of the need for flexibility around territory, control and organizational autonomy. This awareness indicated a high level of understanding of one's own and other organizational needs:

When you have these and frequently there are conflicting viewpoints on implementation sometimes due to resources sometimes due to level of support that the system affords it, so the potential for conflict exists there in all of these. (8)

There was a heightened awareness that simply working through an inter-agency model would make the process a more complex and lengthy one:

Well, I think one thing you realize is that making decisions in a inter-agency process is fairly complex, particularly on some of the thorny issues where the representatives may have to go back to their organizations to seek direction, and so that can affect the pace at which something moves. Having said that, I feel that the benefits of getting... of getting the organizations, including the approval of the organizations for various difficult issues, is important and does contribute a better process. (5)

Communication

The importance of open communication, in constructively dealing with conflicts that arise as part of the development process, was a strongly expressed theme by most respondents. Different reasons were presented to explain the openness. Some felt that it was due to the high level of commitment to collaborative work due to past failures when working alone, and some noted that they had previous good experiences of working together:

Several of them had been on this other committee and so a lot of those thorny issues had already been laid on the table a number of times, so laying them on the table again in the context of a Professional Development Alliance wasn't too strange. (5)

I think all of us around the table have had the challenges of not being about to do all we would like in our own right. So now we're more open and we've worked with people. We understand their perspectives. So we've had some successes - perhaps little partnerships - that have led to this greater one having shared goals and understanding of each other's perspectives. (4)

There was a strong sense of acceptance of differences and an understanding and respect for differences and recognition that healthy debate is a way to move forward and

develop consensus. This resulted in open expression of different ideas especially in the early stages and acceptance that conflicts are another part of the process:

Ideologically, there are differences and there should be differences because that's quite healthy; and it's only in our differences will we create new and innovative ways of doing things. It's when you run into a level of discomfort, you realize that, oh, maybe I need to change. So I think that's quite healthy. (8)

We've been able to be frank with one another. We've had some very, very candid conversations and, I mean, there's nobody on the committee who is afraid to express their views or question the views of another. (7)

I mean, I can think back to meetings, especially there were some real blow-outs from the very first when we had the advisory committee; but at the end of the day, we always used to end up with - if there had been a particular exchange between two or three people - we always used to say, now you understand! We always went away, I think, feeling pretty much as though, well, that needed to be said. (2)

However, there was also a perception that sometimes the relationships that were developed prior to the committee or have developed through participation in this work may have hindered, as well as helped, some aspects of open communication:

However, there are times when I think that we aren't as honest as we need to be and I don't mean that we tell lies. I just think that we don't tell the whole truth, and we hold back. We don't challenge as much because...there's a certain respect that we have for each other...it's very hard to be critical of someone when you know their work, you know how good it's been, and so I think it has been a help, but it can be a hindrance too...sometimes we lose it because we dance around issues a bit and they have to come to a head before somebody will really challenge it. (2)

Structural supports needed for successful implementation

Alter and Hage (1993) have noted that for inter-agency work to be successful, it requires specific structural support including funding, administrative protocols and staffing, and support from the highest administrative levels.

Funding

Most participants expressed awareness of the need for structural supports from within each organization, “the structure is not as strong as I'd like to see it in that there is no...infrastructure” (9). Others agreed that it would be difficult to implement the PDA model without tangible supports to promote the model and provide a visible focus. The lack of a common budget to support the work of the committee was a theme that emerged in relation to potential barriers to the success of the model:

In order to exist, it has to have some tangible existence. It can't exist only as a dialogue around the table. It has to have tangibility. That means in those times between when the Alliance members sit and meet and discuss and make decisions, there has to be some process that allows the work of the Alliance to continue. That means support - so the human resources support. Somebody has to do that work. It also means a budget. There has to be some kind of a financial support for those human resources. (8)

Committee members expressed discomfort that they have to search around for resources to support work that they see as important and intrinsic to central issues in education like teacher professional development:

So that's been a challenge that each person has to go back and say, you know, how are we going to find the ways and means to keep this going so that the good ideas actually can take root. (4)

Some felt that resources, not necessarily in the form of financial contributions, to support the work of the PDA and of the model in practice should be shared between each agency:

So the resourcing might be in the form of dollars. It might be in the form of materials. It might be in the form of workshops. It might be in the form of institutes. (3)

For some the lack of funding was not seen as a major obstacle at this time due to the level of commitment of the participants:

A minor obstacle might be the absence of a level of resourcing to make the change - you know, human resources and fiscal resources that are so essential to make any initiative work. Other than that, I don't see a major impediment because of the level of familiarity and resolve. (8)

There was an expectation that if government supported the ideas of the PDA then it should provide the funding, and if it did not, that would point to a lack of commitment to the process, "my fear is that it won't be resourced and this would be a political decision." (9)

Administrative support

The lack of administrative support was perceived as holding back the work of the PDA. None of the committee members noted problems due to practical issues like lack of time and the competing demands of their workloads:

So just having somebody to drive it on a daily basis, and it's almost at a point where I think we need somebody assigned in an administrative role - we've talked about that - you know, so that when we leave meetings, the things that we talked about are followed up on immediately and then preparations made for the next meeting and so on. (6)

Like the sky is not going to fall. The Telegram is not going to call me today if the PD Alliance doesn't get off the ground. I don't think it has the one person that is saying to all of us: come on, we got to get moving on this. You know, I'm not... I'm not doing it. I don't know who else is. I'm not hearing from anybody. (8)

One of the things that prevents it... well, busyness is an obvious one. I should've taken more leadership. The districts should've taken more leadership. We haven't really done anything about it and I've got other places to spend my time. (1)

The thing about that is we will all kind of temporarily set aside all the other files on our desks and go sit in a room for a day and talk about the PD Alliance and get all very motivated again; but when that day is over, that goes to the bottom of the pile sometimes. And I think that's a big barrier - that the people who are steering it, as committed as we are and as much as we believe in it - it's another committee for us, and it might require a coordinator or a coordinating group that has dedicated time for it. (2)

Leadership

Levin (2001) in his study of educational reform initiatives from an international perspective noted that making effective change is more than a “matter of powerful people putting their well-developed ideas into practice” (p. 190). He noted that the adoption of proposed changes is dependent on both the support of powerful people and other circumstances that cannot be controlled. He argues that “success in this struggle is partly a matter of resources, organization and persistence, but also a matter of whether one’s ideas resonate in a given political and cultural moment” (p. 191).

For some of the PDA participants, the need for supports and leadership from key decision makers within the education field was perceived as an important factor in supporting the adoption and implementation of the model, but many doubts were expressed about the commitment of those with the power and authority to support the work of the PDA:

The people who really have to make that happen, provide that impetus for change, I’m not so sure they have the commitment or even understanding. (7)

The people who are at the top leadership positions are really going to have to get behind this if it's going to work; and if they're not behind it, this is dead in the water. (6)

The need for continuity of the work of the PDA over a significant period, regardless of changes in each organization, a newly elected provincial government, or changes in responsibility at the ministerial level was expressed strongly by more than one person:

We need to make sure that PD Alliance will continue to exist, no matter what happens politically within these organizations, this is why I think it's critically important that the existence of the PD Alliance be recognized in policy or legislation. The PD Alliance needs to be strong enough and needs to be

entrenched in our system to the point where it can't be tampered with, where it will continue. (7)

Connected to the need for support from organizational leaders was a strongly held belief, expressed by most of the respondents, that the PD Alliance needs a powerful leader or advocate to promote the work of the PDA within each of its related organizations. More than one person described the past role of an individual, who was not a member of the committee but was perceived as an early champion for the model who supported rather than directed their work:

I think there was a champion there, who was able to look across the partnerships, look across the P.D. landscape of the province and see that this was a good idea and that champion was able to touch bases with all the key people informally and I suspect, less as an advocate and more as somebody to reassure people who had concerns, about whether or not we should go in this direction. (8)

While some felt that the PDA still needs their champion to make sure that their work comes to fruition, others expressed similar ideas to the person who stated “we should all be champions for this” (1) and “somebody needs to take the lead on making that happen, giving it some direction, giving it some shape, showing people that we do believe” (1).

Local Perspectives

Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers (2004), in their discussions of new and, in their opinion, essential approaches to leadership, assert that a return to the local is essential. They argue that there is no universal solution to initiating positive change for capacity building in learning organizations. There is a need to recognise that real sustainable change emerges from essentially democratic structures that support individuals in making the right choices in local contexts. This process begins at the local level, involves

individuals making internal changes and evolving their relationships with one another.

Senge et al. (2004) support the idea that we can work towards something new that we feel is intuitively right and that while “we may not be able to change the larger systems overnight, we can commit to the continual development of awareness of the capacity to choose” (p. 238).

Underlying many of the comments made by members of the committee were the beliefs that educators in Newfoundland and Labrador could not afford to ignore the potential of collaborative inter-agency work, to support the continuing long-term improvement of the education system:

We have to be mindful of building a long term plan, because that is one of the things that has been either missing or lacking in both development and the implementation of programming and policies in Newfoundland and Labrador's education system. We have put a tremendous effort, both individually and collectively, into developing sometimes first-class, world-class policies and curriculum; but ensuring that that is sustained and implemented appropriately at the classroom level is a significant task that takes time and energy. (10)

Several people commented on the unique nature of this committee's achievement within Canada, given its focus and role and the potential for impact on a range of existing policies:

In terms of this country, we have not seen any kind of inter-agency collaboration to this degree, and certainly in the area of professional development, engaged in something that should be positive and progressive and visionary. We've talked to our colleagues across this country. In every other province in this country they are amazed that we've been able to pull this off (7)

The success of the PDA so far was due in part to the development of good working relationships within a short period of time. A unique provincial factor was the small population of Newfoundland and Labrador, which meant that each person knew

each other socially or through work-related connections and at least, knew about the other people by reputation:

I believe what every partner did bring to the initial meeting, and has brought to every meeting since, is a commitment to do the very best that he or she can and their represented agencies can for the children of this province. So that's what keeps the partners at the table - to know we're small; we have many things going against us: geography, demographics, etc., so we must put our best foot forward. So there is recognition that working apart is not as good as working together. (3)

Some people believe that while a small population could have disadvantages in terms of lack of resources, it has actually facilitated and supported the work of the PDA. It meant that they could identify easily who should play a role with the PDA and had no doubts about the importance of their work:

What's going to work for us in this province; and because we're so small and we network so well, we couldn't see leaving any entity out, because we said, who has a stake in professional development in this province, and we thought it important to have all of the players and nobody left out of that group. (4)

Our smallness is a strength because we know the players... and knowing people generates trust and respect, and we can very often be very frank at the table and people might not appreciate the difference of opinion at a time, but you can have a dialogue and a debate where people will know you and understand you and at least value your view. They may have a different view, but they will value where you're coming from and respect the view and at least give you an opportunity to be heard. So the Alliance worked really well in my view in this province because it's easy to get people together. While we might not understand all of the organizational issues, we know one another and can therefore work well together. (11)

Senge et al. (2004) have noted that, "relationships are more fundamental than things" (p. 203) and for this committee longer term relationships have played an important role in developing the vision for the future of teacher professional development in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. As some participants explained:

You have to recognize that we got a wonderful, wonderful thing in this province, and that is we're small and we all know each other and we've worked together numerous times. (9)

Finally, some described the inter-agency approach to policy making as something that they were committed to and ultimately as being the best approach within the provincial context:

[It's a] post-modern approach to policy development ... it's done in a collaborative spirit and with players that really want to embrace this. (11)

We have a large geography, but there are only a half a million people and once you get to the professional community, you know, most of us know each other. So it's not a big task to bring the players together. Maybe the marvel is that we haven't done this sooner. (6)

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter considers the limitations of the research study before proceeding to summarize the main findings, to set them within context and to consider their implications.

Limitations of Study

This study focused on a small group of education professionals working within a particular educational context. The findings are limited in terms of our ability to generalize from them. However, they are likely to be useful to education policy makers and strategic planners in Newfoundland and Labrador who wish to use inter-agency approaches and develop new approaches for implementing systemic changes in the future. The findings may have less interest to policy makers and education planners in other jurisdictions but they will contribute to the broader body of knowledge that is derived from research into inter-agency cooperation and collaborative practices within educational contexts.

This research has identified factors unique to the Newfoundland and Labrador context that have helped the PDA to overcome potential organizational barriers, and enabled the individuals involved to work together and support the processes involved in developing this framework for teacher professional development. A better understanding of these factors will provide insight into the potential barriers and supports for future inter-organizational collaboration between education organizations.

Main findings

Origins of PDA

The origins of the PDA can be found in policy documents and research papers written by its members and their associates. The need for an inter-agency approach emerged over several years in response to the perceived failure of earlier initiatives. These previous approaches were believed to have failed because they were usually based on delivery models in which appointed experts at district office, or department of education levels tried to provide leadership for curriculum change or for school growth initiatives. The teachers' association also offered supports for professional development. The university was responsible for pre-service preparatory programming or postgraduate qualifications. In most cases each agency worked in isolation and without consultation with other potential partners and interest groups.

The PDA exists because there is a perceived need for effective teacher professional development in Newfoundland and Labrador. Effective in the local context means that it needs to account for the low population, large geography, and limited resources of the province. Professional development for teachers also needs to account for more effective teaching leading to higher standards achieved by high school graduates enabling their successful transition to becoming active participants within an increasingly complex and inter-connected global economy.

New models of teacher professional development promote approaches that are founded on continual collaborative approaches to professional learning. This is a necessary change that is likely to be efficient in terms of available resources. Research by Darling-Hammond (1997) and many others supports the effectiveness of ongoing

engagement of teachers as professionals with their own learning. The increased focus on professional development is designed not simply to tell teachers about changes in the curriculum that they are mandated to teach but also to raise professional standards and developing a shared consciousness for improving classroom practice. Action researchers, such as Little (1994), maintain that not only does this approach improve standards of student learning, but also it is the most effective and efficient way to do so. Senge et al. (2004) support this model of “alignment of personal purpose and the larger purpose of the organization” (p. 178).

The members of the PDA had a very high level of awareness of this body of research as well as the provincial directives from government to find a way to reform how teachers become involved with their own professional development. This lent a sense of urgency to their perception of the work that they had to do in developing a new approach to teacher professional development.

Throughout the interviews a strong sense of the significance of the work was expressed. Each member was keenly aware that members of their own constituency were waiting and watching for results. This also led to a strong sense of personal and group responsibility for the work that they were doing.

Membership of PDA

The inclusive and comprehensive nature of the committee membership is a significant factor in contributing the positive aspects of the work of the PDA and, also, simultaneously created some of the difficulties that they have experienced.

Recommendation 47 of the *Supporting Learning* (2000) document specifically

recommended that a multi agency group was needed to deal with the problem of improving teacher professional development. This was based on recognition that without certain players the outcomes would probably not be effective. However, the initial group did not include the Faculty of Education at Memorial University and the committee members took the initiative of inviting representatives from that body. This oversight was identified and rectified early on, due to some extent, to previous close working relationships that members had developed with the Faculty of Education.

The inter-agency features of the PDA are a necessary pre-requisite to developing a model for teacher professional development that is congruent with current research. To implement the use of a model that is comprehensive and responsive to needs, it is essential that it be supported through inter-agency cooperation. This will ensure that there is consistency between policies, that there is efficient use of resources, and that teachers' needs will be met. One agency cannot implement this model alone

Membership features

Most members of the committee had previous contact through work on committees or due to a range of positions that they had held. This enabled members to have a better understanding of the different strengths and constraints within each member organization that will affect the implementation and long-term development of the PDA model.

The membership of the PDA had remained fairly stable at the time of this research. Each organization had maintained membership although a few individual members had changed. Stability of membership in terms of developing relationships and

the understanding of the direction of the work by each of the individuals involved was seen as a highly significant factor especially as the model was being developed.

However, realistically it needs to be acknowledged that membership of the PDA will change as people move on to new positions. If the PDA is to remain a strong and viable entity it needs to be able to accommodate such changes and adapt to fresh perspectives and relationships. One approach to this is noted by Alter and Hage (1993). They advocate the use of induction protocols for new members so that they have a sense of the history of the group, how they have arrived at the present position and what the vision of the future is. New members can have a disruptive effect and perhaps temporarily divert or de-rail the work. However, they can also highlight the dangers of “groupthink, the control often subtle, censoring of honesty and authenticity in a team” (Senge et al., 2004, p. 31).

Relationships

Inter-personal relationships within the PDA were longstanding and varied. For the most part people perceived each other in a positive professional collegial light and some regarded each other as friends. Many of these relationships developed within the PDA through working together towards shared goals. The recognition that they had common goals was achieved through open communication at the early stages of the group discussions and also prior to the formation of the PDA. This meant that the members felt free to debate and discuss issues, challenge mental models before coming to consensus. There was a high degree of mutual respect and trust expressed for each other. This has

led to a sense of loyalty to the PDA as a group and some individual sense of dissonance when PDA goals and home organization goals were in conflict.

It is worth noting that the development of close working relationships also had an opposite effect, in that people were aware that sometimes they did not express their views openly so as not to offend someone they respected or liked. This shows that there is a need for formalized structures to permit dissent or alternative viewpoints to avoid 'groupthink' within this type of committee. This would permit open discussion to take place without undermining positive relationships and enable members to understand each other's perspectives, without being seen as disloyal to the home organization. The use of strategies, such as taking on roles for the sake of argument (e.g. 'the critical friend' or 'devil's advocate'), could be effective in supporting awareness of the implications of changes for each organization.

Potential impact of PDA model on member organizations

If it is fully implemented, it is very likely that the PDA model will cause changes in each organization. From the perspective of the Faculty of Education, undergraduate and graduate students may challenge the philosophical basis of the content of pre-service degrees, program delivery models, and the goals of faculty members, if they are not congruent with the needs of teachers and of the system. There may be discussions around increased flexibility in relation to access to courses and in defining what would qualify for credit at undergraduate and graduate levels. This could lead to conflict with some principles of academic freedom and the need to maintain what are perceived as high academic standards.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association already plays a dual role within education. The membership expects it to negotiate a collective agreement for employment benefits and remuneration with government, but it also has a traditional role in responding to the needs of its membership in the area of professional development. The changes advocated by the PDA are likely to lead to a greater level of cooperation with the other members in relation to the provision of professional development opportunities. It may also lead to some conflicts with the Faculty of Education if the NLTA promotes the need for increased access to postgraduate course, or proposes a broader definition of what content or standard of work should be eligible for full or partial credit. To promote the life-long learning model that is embedded in the philosophical foundations of the PDA, the NLTA may see a need for increased incentives and new approaches to teacher certification. Demands for increased financial rewards for teachers tend to be rejected by government, and this is a probable source for future conflict.

Management structures within the K-12 education system at government department and district school levels have been traditionally based on authority derived from position and power, within a hierarchical system. A democratic person-centred philosophy is at the heart of the PDA model, and this places the individual teacher's perception of his or her professional development needs at the centre. If acted upon in an authentic manner this approach is likely to cause some discomfort within a system where decisions about what teachers need to learn have been traditionally made at the top, and handed down via regulations, policies, new curricula workshops and in-service programs. The assumption has been that large groups of teachers had essentially the same needs,

and would receive the same training or information packages. The move towards an individualized focus will undermine traditional models and could cause internal dissonance among those who have been dependent on leadership from above.

One aspect of this approach that has not been explicitly addressed by the PDA is the likely impact on the concept of the prescribed curriculum that is taught to students. If teachers can be given more individualized supports in response to their professional learning needs, it may follow that they will in turn question the validity of the provincial curriculum, that they are expected to teach to all students. If awareness of relevance, coherence and responsiveness are all factors to be considered for teachers as they learn, these might in turn become concerns in relation to what they are teaching. Systemic change as advocated is probably going to have unpredicted impacts on the system as a whole that will lead to unexpected changes for all involved with it. The crucial element in this type of change is that we cannot predict where it will ultimately lead as new roles emerge and unfold for teachers engaged with the process.

Members of the PDA were aware of potential for conflict and disagreement but were prepared to promote the model that they have developed as they believe that it is essential for the good of the education system of the province. Overall, there was a strong sense of belief in the work they were doing, based not so much in traditional authority sources such as legislation or position, but in academic research findings and this belief was strengthened through the process of engaging in an inter-agency partnership.

Insight into inter-agency collaboration

Developing the policy

The responses of the participants in this study served to illuminate some key factors that support and others that impede the work of an inter-agency committee. They support the belief that building positive working relationships should be a primary goal of each team member. Explicit or implicit permission from the parent organization to each committee member to engage in these new types of working relationships is essential for trust and open communication to develop. This would enable each team member to honestly present the views of the home organization and be heard in a respectful atmosphere. It would also permit members to listen and hear what the others are saying without judgement but with empathy with the other members and their organizations. Taking the perspective and position of the other has been asserted as an essential component in the development of effective inter-agency work. Long-term relationships and stable membership combine to help the group develop a coherent shared vision. From the perspective of this study this group has managed to develop a coherent approach to teacher professional development that is sensitive to the needs of each organization while promoting a radical and new approach.

Implementing the policy

While the group has managed to work effectively in developing the framework it has experienced greater difficulty with issues around implementation. Disagreements and some distrust have arisen when the speed and scope of implementation are considered. The symposium was a critical element to begin the implementation process. It enabled

the broader membership of each agency to give feedback and provided an opportunity to promote the adoption of the framework within each jurisdiction. The feedback was positive and the understanding of the model and its purpose was at a high level. There was a fear among some committee members that the symposium would be an end in itself and they wished to build on the interest and momentum created to move forward quickly. Others advocated a more incremental approach and were inclined to continue to slowly move forward with the belief that this would provide a solid foundation for the future. It is worth noting that those working most directly with classroom teachers felt the need for increased pace in implementing the mode, but incrementally as a way to provide examples of how it would look to others. The incremental 'prototype and iterate' or 'create and adjust' approach is recommended by Senge et al. (2004) who assert that implementing or creating something new cannot be completed in a predictable linear manner.

Another key area of difference was between those who felt the need for legislation or regulations to support the implementation versus those who took the position this type of change cannot be mandated and must be based on consensus. Although legislation seems contrary to the central construct of the model of individual personal choice it was justified by some, in that it could enable access to resources, and the committee would have the authority necessary to maintain the model. Most research into inter-organizational models of collaboration has been conducted within the private sector, and in that context findings point to the benefits of modelling and motivational strategies to support this type of work, rather than imposition of a new model through regulations. In the context of education it is likely that parts of the system and individuals

within the system will resist any imposition of a new model either passively or directly. “You cannot convince the protectors of the old paradigms with better arguments” (Senge et al., 2004, p. 36). It would be best to work with individuals who are open to change and prepared to model the change within each agency rather than a legislated approach.

Regardless of the pace of implementation, there is a need for structural supports to support inter-agency work at the highest level within each organization. As Senge et al. (2004, p. 35) note: “when the organizational immune system kicks in, innovators often find themselves ignored, ostracized or even worse.” The perceived lack of high-level commitment and support from each organization was noted by some participants who also acknowledged the danger of moving too quickly or too far, when pushing the boundaries of accepted practice. There was a strong feeling that the PDA needs a champion at the highest level of government to support and promote the work of the PDA across the organizations involved.

Local factors

Some factors specific to the Newfoundland and Labrador context are worth noting and may add to our understanding and inform future similar endeavours in this province or in other places with similar educational needs, population size, culture and geography. The ability to establish good working relationships quickly was attributed to the fact that each knew or knew of each other and had developed respect for each other’s work over time prior to the establishment of the PDA.

There was a strong commitment by the participants to this framework because it was believed that it would have a positive impact both on the teaching profession and on

student performance. This common vision provided a strong motivation for each member to continue with the work of the PDA despite the difficulties and roadblocks that have caused frustration.

Key factors in successful inter-agency work

The following factors were identified as necessary by PDA members for successful inter-agency work and are consistent with previous research into successful inter-agency work.

Some factors are organizational: recognition by each organization of the need for collaboration; shared vision and goals between member organizations; structural supports for the ongoing work; and advocacy for the goals of the collaboration at the highest levels of each organization; permission to form relationships across organizational boundaries; and the recognition that there will be some concessions made around territory or authority.

Other factors are intra-individual: the ability to network across organizations; high levels of knowledge, commitment and motivation; ability to build relationships based on trust and open communication; ability to speak honestly about potential barriers to progress; and the ability to take the perspective other than one's own.

Intrinsic to inter-agency work is the concept of boundary crossing and most of the PDA members have manifested this behaviour by developing relationships across the organizational boundaries, engaging in networking behaviour and also having prior experience of working within different organizations at different times. Boundary-crossing behaviour can make members of an inter-organizational group feel vulnerable

and unsupported. The explicit presence of a powerful champion or advocate can alleviate some of these feelings and validate this type of behaviour.

Working within an inter-agency model is complicated and risky. Introducing systemic and radical changes that will have an impact on each agency multiplies the level of complexity of the task. The PDA as a group are sensitive to the importance of their work and the delicate nature of the inter-agency structure that they have created. Whether they can succeed with the implementation of the framework is questionable with the current level of resources and perceived levels of support.

This study of the PDA supports the metaphor that working in an inter-agency milieu is like a marriage. Like any meaningful relationship at the individual level it needs, resources, commitment, compatibility and motivation to make it work, despite the inevitable conflicts and disagreements that will emerge over the long term. At the organizational level each “family” has territorial and control needs that will have to take second place if the inter-agency relationship is to grow strong enough to be effective.

Any future inter-agency committees should consider the elements that have been identified in this study as promoting and supporting inter-agency work as well as those factors that have impeded its progress. Consideration should be given to the membership of the committee, the way that the committee is formed, and the way that the committee conducts business. Potential problems need to be acknowledged and include awareness of the nature and complexity of the task to be completed. Despite these difficulties it is clear from this study that not only is the work of the PDA important and worthwhile it serves as a useful model for similar inter-agency work in the public sector in the future.

This research indicates that the PDA has managed to create a collaborative, coherent framework for implementing the reform and improvement of teacher professional development in Newfoundland and Labrador. The framework is based soundly in current research and is an exemplar of best practices within the field of education. The members of the PDA have modelled the same practices that they wish to see emulated in the field in how they went about establishing good working relationships. As individuals most have articulated ideas and modelled practices that are recognised as typical of boundary spanning behaviour. These factors have led to the PDA steering committee operating as a learning organization as defined by Senge (1990).

Within the area of educational policy reform it is recognised that the task of creating and maintaining authentic meaningful change that leads to improved classroom practices and school improvement is a difficult one. However, it is also the one area of reform that really matters when the goal is improving the effectiveness of the education system through capacity building. The PDA members have taken on this challenge, and recognise that they have added another layer of complexity to their work by adopting an inter-agency model. They understand the importance of their task in the current social and economic context of Newfoundland and Labrador, where both an effective and efficient education system is demanded. Despite the pressures of undertaking such a challenging task, not least of which is achieving consensus within the group while retaining support for the PDA within each agency represented at the table, the PDA members' responses suggest that there was no better way to develop and implement changes that will have a lasting impact.

Certain local factors have supported this work and some others have hindered it. Some conditions specific to Newfoundland and Labrador have had a positive effect. Most members have worked in different agencies throughout their careers and have developed previous working relationships with each of the other players. The small population of the province has played a role in facilitating the growth of those relationships. A strong personal commitment to collaboration and the vision of the PDA goal has been identified as a significant factor in inter-agency work. Each member of this group identified strongly with improving educational standards in the province, implicitly perhaps, from a personal as well as a professional sense of loyalty and duty to support the provincial educational culture. The work of the PDA is complex and demanding but the high level of the commitment of its members to overcoming obstacles and achieving their goals suggests that they may succeed in reaching their goals in the long term.

It is worth noting that the obstacles identified by each respondent tended to be identified as belonging to the “other’s” agency. Some looked to government to provide the additional funding and administrative supports necessary to support their work. On the other hand, representatives from the Department of Education talked more about cost sharing and more effective use of existing resources. This is a source of conflict that the PDA members need to acknowledge and work through.

The need for more formalised tangible administrative support to give consistent direction and support to the work, was expressed strongly. However, administrative support or funding will not be sufficient until support from influential leaders within each agency is recognised as essential for the future credibility of the model in the field. In particular, explicit support from the highest levels within the Department of Education is

necessary. Some members also believe, despite their awareness of the weakness of top-down change implementation models, that a major obstacle to the future of the PDA is that it is not supported by policy or legislation, and assert that while it exists merely as a recommended framework it can be ignored and brushed aside.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The PDA model for implementing changes to teacher professional development has the capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the province. There may be resistance to its implementation and some possible unintended consequences of this model. As Fullan (2001) has pointed out, change is often resisted even when it may be advantageous. If interest groups within education perceive that personally negative outcomes are likely to be derived from the PDA model, they may consciously or subconsciously derail its progress, even if the system as a whole could benefit.

Levin (2001) has noted that policy reform is often chaotic and frequently contradictory. He observed that many international reform initiatives that appeared to be fairly coherent actually failed to have lasting impact, despite being supported strongly through policy regulations, legislation, and public opinion. The relative failure of policies that were politically driven, by governments with strong mandates, implies that the work of the PDA is unlikely to succeed without both grassroots acceptance and organizational level supports.

The work of the PDA is based on long-term goals that will directly impact upon the whole education system. Highly visible, short-term successes will be necessary to encourage the uptake of the model in the field and to sustain the motivation and direction

of the steering committee. The committee should agree to work towards the achievement of tangible short-term goals, such as the formal adoption of the PDA model within each member agency, and the immediate formal acquisition of sustaining funding and administrative supports from each member agency.

Members of inter-agency committees may agree on the general philosophy and content of the changes but fail to follow through with the implementation, if they have not been specifically asked to make a commitment to that as well. Therefore, each member organization of the PDA should work through parallel collaborative processes to discuss the implications of the changes, adopt the general principles and develop and share their own implementation plans for each organization.

Structural supports for the PDA steering committee should include those noted in this study. For example, administrative support is needed to organise regular meetings, provide written documents that record consensus around common goals, and to create a focal point and contact base for the committee and the wider education community. New members to the committee need to be formally inducted into the processes, procedures and vision of the committee.

Currently the PDA appears to lack direction and leadership and the committee may have lost some momentum. This may be because several members of the committee have changed positions or retired, it is important that the PDA plans for such changes so that the committee will continue regardless of the individuals who serve on it. It also must be recognised and accepted that conflict is a core element within inter-agency work, and inter-agency committees need to continually identify areas of conflict, address them openly, and continue to work through them.

Another important factor to consider in analysing the current state of the PDA is that a change of government took place in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador in the fall of 2003. The new government has a stated reform agenda that is dedicated to creating efficiencies within the public service, including the education system. To this end there have been changes at all levels of administration at the Department of Education, in school districts and some members of the PDA committee are no longer in positions of authority and influence. These changes are similar to those types of highly visible structural changes, imposed by governments that are described by Levin (2000) as having the ability to reduce costs but have little impact on improving the effectiveness of classroom practice. It is possible that these changes could reduce opportunities for ongoing teacher professional development especially if current models of delivery continue, as there will be fewer district level consultants to provide advice and training. At the provincial level it is likely that there will be a slowing down of the pace of curriculum innovation with less demand for traditional teacher professional development.

While these reductions in current models of service delivery are perceived negatively throughout the system, especially by those directly affected, it could be hypothesised that paradoxically, this will create a context that will make the work of the PDA more significant, more relevant, and more accepted than it was before. Teachers will still be expected to teach to a high standard and will continue to be accountable to parents and the Department of Education for student achievement levels. A flexible model of teacher professional development, that is both efficient and effective, is still required, if the Department of Education is determined to achieve the goals of raising achievement levels in Newfoundland and Labrador, so that they compare favourably with

national and international standards. To maintain this commitment to student learning there needs to be a parallel commitment to continued teacher professional development. The PDA model is probably the most approach (Owen, 2003) and it is consistent with current government policies.

It is worth noting that despite these reductions in staffing levels, the government has continued to commit substantial funding in its budget to teacher professional development (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2004). Currently this funding is allocated within a model that supports providing substitute teachers, to enable classroom teachers to upgrade academic qualifications or to attend traditional in-service events. If direct access to professional development funds was available to teachers, either through individual grant applications, or via school based dedicated funding for professional development, they could begin to put into practice the model advocated by the PDA. They could choose to engage in teacher professional development based on their individual professional needs, within the context of each school's growth plan. The range of professional development opportunities should range from in school, peer collaboration, to attendance at conferences or involvement with on-line learning. This could also lead to greater direct involvement in teacher professional development of the other partners in the PDA, such as the Faculty of Education at Memorial University and the NLTA for providing in-service opportunities for individual or groups of teachers.

The model that the PDA has developed is innovative, flexible, teacher centred and based upon strong research evidence (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 1997; Little, 1994). It has potentially great value for improving student outcomes and has relevance in the current educational context. The PDA has a responsibility to continue their work and support the

implementation of their model for changing the nature and quality of teacher professional development, despite some recent setbacks. An advantage of having an inter-agency committee is that not all members are equally impacted by recent changes and upheavals within the school system. Members of the PDA from the agencies who have not been directly affected by the most recent government restructuring of school districts, the university and the teachers' association can take the lead to advocate and ensure that this inter-agency model is adopted by each member agency, supported financially, expressed in policy, and implemented and sustained throughout the education system.

The PDA needs to re-group and review its current status. Its members need to reflect as individuals and as group members on their collective vision for teacher professional development. They should identify examples that illustrate the positive impact when the model has been implemented and share those examples with the committee and with members of each agency. An invitation should be made directly to teachers, who are interested in promoting or implementing the model to contact the PDA steering committee for advice and direction. Examples of successful implementation should be published in the journals and newsletters of each agency. Recognition for good examples of the PDA model in practice should be formalized through awards supported within each agency. In doing so, the PDA will work towards what Senge et al. (2004) described as the collective embodiment or positive institutionalization of the committee's vision of teacher professional development "because until the new becomes embedded in its own routines, practices and institutional norms, it is not yet real" (p.172).

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Appendix A

Research questions /Interview topics

Investigating the structure and formation of the Professional Development Alliance.

1. How did PDA members come together to develop the policy?
 - a. How was the PDA formed?
 - b. Why was the PDA formed?
 - c. How has the PDA evolved?
 - d. What is the role of each agency within the PDA?
 - e. How does each agency function within the PDA?
 - f. What are the perceptions of commitment of each agency to the PDA?
 - g. Does the PDA have authority to mandate policy change?

Investigating how the policy was developed.

2. What is the purpose of this policy?
 - a. Is there a perceived driving force behind this policy change?
 - b. What sources of information were used to develop the policy?
 - c. What type of policy is it?

Investigating the supports and obstacles to the process of policy development.

3. What were the perceived barriers and supports for the development of the policy?
 - a. Agency roles and mandates
 - b. Structural and procedural issues

- c. Ideological/ theoretical positions of individuals
- d. Formal and informal relationships

Investigating the impact of an inter-agency approach.

- 3. How did the inter-agency approach influence the work of the committee?
 - a. Reaching consensus
 - b. Speed of development
 - c. Policy content
 - d. Potential impact of policy

Appendix B

Consent form to be used for all participants

Multi -agency policy change processes in teacher professional development

I, _____ have read the letter of invitation to participate and research project overview. I understand the objectives and methods outlined in the proposed research. I understand that the project has been approved by the Ethics Committee at Memorial University of Newfoundland and I am satisfied with the confidentiality safeguards and protections of individual privacy that are in place for this study.

I understand that:

- I am free to refuse participation in this project without fear of consequence and with complete confidentiality regarding my participation/non-participation.
- If I choose to participate I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- The interviews will be taped, and that at any point in or during the research, I may ask for the tape recorder to be turned off.
- Only the transcriber(s) and the researcher who will not divulge names will hear the tapes.
- The transcripts and tapes will not include participants' names but will be coded with an identification number. The names and numbers will be kept by the researcher in a secure file.

- Only the researcher will have access to the transcripts.
- No names of participants will be used without written, informed consent.
- The tapes and transcripts will be kept in a secure file until the end of the project, after the project is completed they will be maintained in a secure archive at Memorial University

I understand that all data collected by means of semi-structured interviews are intended to be used strictly for analytical, research and educational purposes. I give my permission for release of these data in the public domain, within the confidentiality guidelines outlined, including use of the written reports and within an educational conference context. I realize that my name will not appear in any of these reports unless I give explicit written permission and have read the report.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time. Upon withdrawal all of the interview data that pertains to me will be destroyed. Under these conditions, I agree to participate in this study.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C

Letter requesting participation

REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Multi -agency policy change processes in teacher professional development

Dear (Insert *name of P. D. A. committee member*),

I am conducting research as part the requirements for a degree of Master of Education at Memorial University. My thesis supervisor is Professor D. C. Dibbon, Ph.D. Faculty of Education, Memorial University.

I am requesting your participation in a research project into the processes that have led to the development of the current Professional Development Alliance proposal for improving teacher professional development.

The focus of this study is to develop an understanding of multi agency policy development processes. Data gathered will be used to develop a theory of multi-agency policy development. The research will focus on the following broad questions:

- a. How was the PDA formed?
- b. How was the policy developed
- c. What were the main supports and obstacles to the policy development process?

- d. How did the multi-agency approach impact on the development of the policy?

You are invited to participate in an individual semi-structured one-two hour interview that will be audio taped and subsequently you will have an opportunity to verify, clarify and elaborate on the content of the first interview after it is transcribed.

Please be assured that this study meets the ethical guidelines of the Faculty of Education and Memorial University of Newfoundland. Your anonymity as far as possible will be protected and all records of your participation/ non-participation in the research project will be kept confidential unless your written permission for release is obtained. You also have the right to withdraw from the research at any time during or after the data collection phase. During the research process all recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After the research is completed tape recordings will be destroyed and transcripts will be maintained in a secure archive. The results of the research will be available to you after the study is concluded. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with the research study, please contact Ms. Eleanor Butler at the Office of Research, Memorial University.

Please indicate your consent for participation in the project by signing the attached consent form.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Murray,

M.Ed. candidate.

Appendix D

PowerPoint slides and handouts from PDA symposium

Professional Development Alliance

A Proposed Model



Professional Development: A Definition

Professional development is the continual renewal of personal knowledge and expertise that leads to improved professional competence in support of student learning.

Professional development engages individuals and groups in a broad range of activities, including teacher preparation, in-service, individual development, program implementation, staff development, and organizational development.



Teacher-Centered Professional Development



Teacher at the Center

- Effective professional development requires a balanced approach in which choices are available and encouraged in relation to identified individual and organizational needs.

*Atlantic Canada Departments of Education
and Teacher Organizations (2000)*



Teacher at the Center

- Professional development activities must respond to needs that have been identified by educators and are intended to have an impact on student learning.
- Professional development should be driven in a significant way by individual professional growth plans.

*Professional Development Advisory
Committee (1998)*



Teacher at the Center

Teacher development is considered especially productive when teachers are in charge of the agenda and determine the focus and nature of the programming offered. In the name of professional autonomy, many argue that teachers should determine the shape and course of their own development (*Ball, 1996, p. 502*).



Teacher at the Center

Teachers do make a difference. They do know their situations. They are not mere screens who translate others' intentions and ideologies into practice. Teachers' knowledge is an essential component in improving educational practice. Those concerned with improving education need to be concerned not only with what it is they wish to happen in learning but also with teachers' knowledge and the professional knowledge landscapes in which teachers work.

(Connelly, Clandinin & He, 1997).



Educators



Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- The need for lifelong learning is shifting the emphasis from a dependence on the "what" of learning to the "how" of learning. *(Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Learning to Learn, 1991)*
- The continual renewal of knowledge and expertise, through a variety of experiences, is central to the concept of professionalism. *(Atlantic Canada Departments of Education and Teacher Organizations, 2000)*



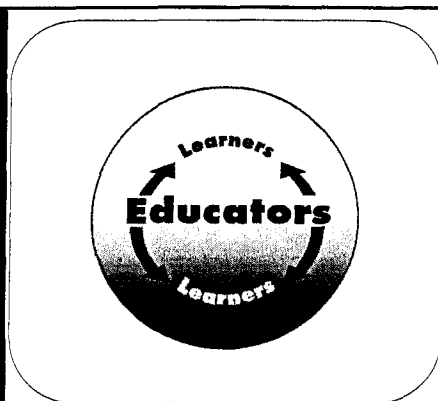
Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- Adult lives change rapidly, and the longevity of human beings pushes steadily upward . . . Lifelong learning is becoming a necessity, not just a mellifluous phrase. (*Howard Gardner, 1999*).
- We are witnessing an educational refocusing away from teaching unrelated, fragmented, short-term content toward broader, enduring, more essential life-span learnings. (*Costa and Kallick, 2000*).



Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- Every organization has to become a learning institution (and) a teaching institution. Organizations that build in continuous learning in jobs will dominate the 21st century. (*Drucker, 1992*)
- The most successful corporation of the future will be a learning organization. (*Senge, 1990*).



Professional Development Linked to Student Learning



Student Learning

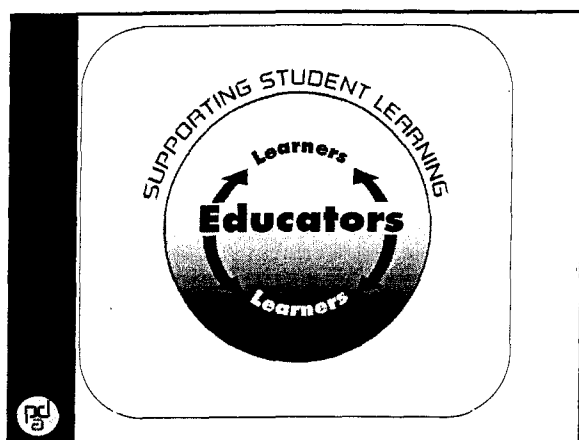
- Professional development benefits educators and supports student learning. (*Atlantic Canada Departments of Education and Teacher Organizations, 2000*)
- Professional development activities must respond to needs that have been identified by educators and are intended to have an impact on student learning. (*Professional Development Advisory Committee, 1998*)



Student Learning

- There is growing evidence of the link between professional development and improvement in student learning (Fullan, 1993, 1995; Guskey, 1995).
- If new practices are to become institutionalized, then teachers must be convinced that these practices contribute to making a difference in student learning. (Guskey, 1995).





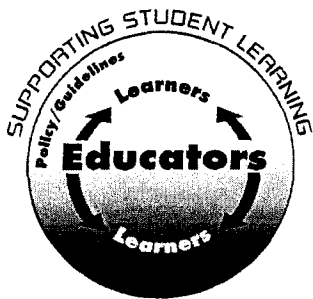
Professional Development in Context

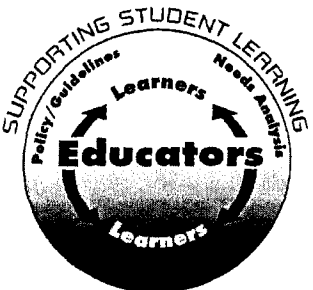
- ### The Context of PD
- The continual renewal of knowledge and expertise, through a variety of experiences, is central to the concept of professionalism.
 - Effective professional development requires a balanced approach in which choices are available and encouraged in relation to identified individual and organizational needs.
 - Professional development initiatives have the greatest impact when supported by strong leadership and collaboration.
 - Change in society and schools is inevitable and should be viewed as an opportunity for growth.


The Context of PD

- Professional development, to be effective, must be embedded in teacher work and teacher knowledge and is school based. (Abdal-Haqq, 1995).
- "The contexts in which teachers work affects what they do." (Ball, 1996, p. 501-502)











Access to Diverse Professional Development Opportunities



PD Delivery

- There is a need to establish cooperatively how to best identify teacher professional development needs and to deliver programs effectively and efficiently to meet these needs.
- Professional Development should be accessible, affordable, sustainable, and relevant.

(Professional Development Advisory Committee, 1998)



PD Delivery: Diverse Approaches

- A multiple intelligences approach can be drawn upon ... to present ideas that are consequential. This approach can be of use to anyone seeking to master any significant topic ... including someone who has not been inside a classroom for decades.

(Howard Gardner, 1999)

PD Delivery: Collaboration

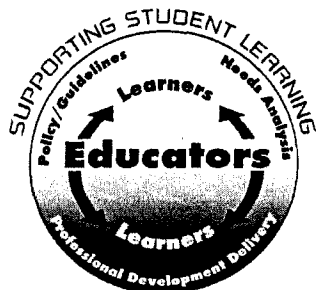
- Cooperative humans realize that all of us together are more powerful, intellectually or physically, than any one individual. Probably the foremost disposition in the postindustrial society is the heightened ability to think in concert with others, to find ourselves increasingly more interdependent and sensitive to the needs of others. Problem solving has become so complex that no one person can go it alone. *(Costa and Kallick, 2000)*.

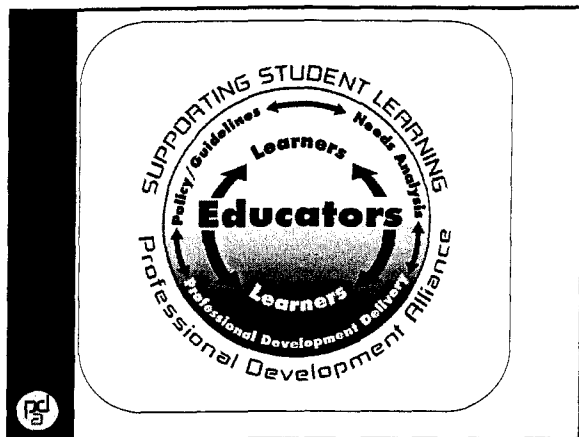


PD Delivery: Some Key Elements

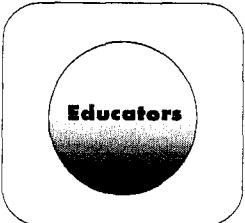
- Choice
- Balance of Individual and Organizational needs
- Collaboration
- Diversity of Approaches
- Role of technology
- System of incentives and rewards





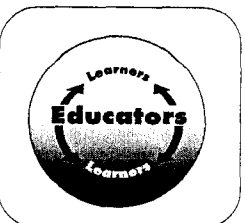


Educators refer primarily to teachers but also include professional personnel at school districts, the Department of Education, Memorial University and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association



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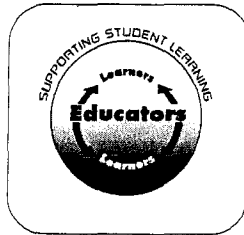


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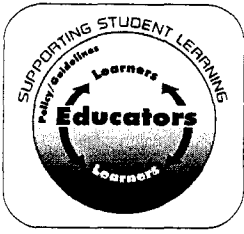
Supporting Student Learning: All professional development is focused on enhancing student learning.



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Policy/Guidelines includes definitions, beliefs and best practices that impact on professional development in the province. Policies and guidelines also refer to frameworks and procedures for recognizing participation in professional development.

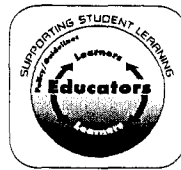


Policy/Guidelines

Each educator determines his or her PD needs in the context of policy/guidelines and other inputs. Inputs, both internal and external, refer to those forces that drive the need for professional development activities, including new curricula, the findings of research into aspects of teaching and learning, policies and regulations, strategic plans, social and economic conditions and individual professional growth plans.



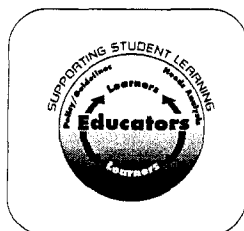
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Needs Analysis refers to such activities as setting annual agendas, monitoring the impact of professional development initiatives, and highlighting particular areas of need, both organizational and individual.

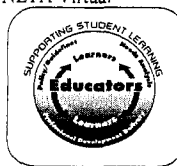


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Professional Development Delivery: Providers

Providers include the individuals, groups, and mechanisms through whom or which professional development activities are undertaken. Providers can be internal or external to the province or the education system. Within the provincial education system, PD providers include teachers, program specialists/consultants/officers (District, Department of Education, NLTA), special interest councils of NLTA, Memorial University, the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI), the NLTA Virtual Teacher Centre (VTC).



Professional Development Delivery: Forms of PD

Forms of PD include the various ways professional development can be organized and delivered, including institutes, workshops, learning teams and individualized learning. These forms of PD may be undertaken face-to-face, through mediating technologies (eg web-based), private study, or combinations of various types.

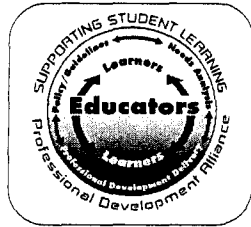


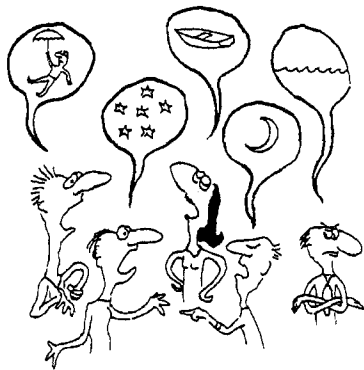
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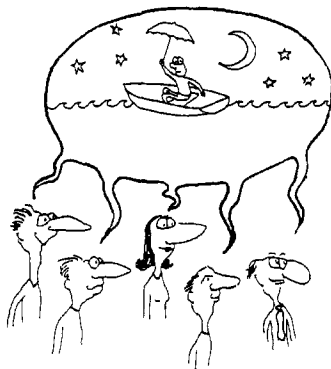


Professional Development Alliance

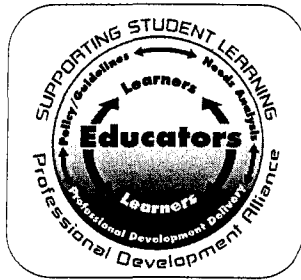
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Professional Development Alliance and Change



CREATING LEARNING COMMUNITIES
PD ALLIANCE SYMPOSIUM
October 3-4 , 2002
Airport Plaza Hotel – St. John's, NL

DAY 1 - OCTOBER 3 , 2002

9:30 a.m.	Welcome
9:40 a.m.	Historical Overview / Context (Mr. Eric Burry, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education)
10:00 a.m.	Professional Development: A Proposed Model (Dr. Alice Collins, MUN; René Wicks, NLTA; and Mary Tucker, School District #9) (with questions)
10:40 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m.	Role Specific Groups – Clarification of Model
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m.	Cross Organizational Groups – Issues for Implementation
2:30 p.m.	Gallery Walk
3:00 p.m.	Issues Prioritization and Synthesis
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Wine and Cheese

DAY 2 – OCTOBER 4, 2002

8:45 a.m.	Welcome/Greetings – Dr. Harold Press, Deputy Minister of Education; Mr. Winston Carter, President, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association; and Dr. Alice Collins, Acting Dean, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
9:00 a.m.	CAROUSEL ROUND 1 Issue Specific Groups
9:45 a.m.	CAROUSEL ROUND 2 Issue Specific Groups
10:15 a.m.	Nutrition Break
10:45 a.m.	CAROUSEL ROUND 3 Issue Specific Groups
11:15 a.m.	CAROUSEL ROUND 4 Issue Specific Groups
11:45 a.m.	Posting of Issues Gallery Walk
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m.	Organizational Groups ➤ Action Planning ➤ Future Directions
2:00 p.m.	Reporting back – 2 minutes each
2:30 p.m.	Professional Development Alliance – Commitment to Action



Professional Development Alliance

[Home](#)[Meeting Notes - Docs](#)[Discussion Forum](#)[About Us](#)[Background / Mandate /
Partners](#)[PD Model - Information -
Activities](#)[Partner Information](#)[Features](#)[Terms of Reference](#)

PDA Conference

October 3 - 4, 2002

[Conference Information](#)

Welcome to the Professional Development Alliance

Sustained and focused professional development is essential to the maintenance of a highly motivated and qualified teaching force. The effective development and delivery of programs in a changing educational milieu require educators at all levels of the education system to be lifelong learners. Any curriculum initiative must include a specific plan that clearly delineates the professional development required for teachers and the resources to provide such training.

Sustained professional development incorporates blocks of time outside the student school year (e.g., time at the beginning of the year, within the year or a combination of the two). Sustained professional development also requires the fullest utilization of new technologies (e.g., web-based initiatives) as well as more traditional initiatives (e.g., summer institutes).

The impetus for the current Professional Development Alliance Committee was recommendation 47 of *Supporting Learning: Report of the Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom*. Recommendation 47 called for the Department of Education, school boards and the NLTA to form a Professional Development Alliance under a consortium model with the following goals:

- to develop a shared annual professional development agenda;
- to develop a new model of professional development institutes for teachers;
- to establish a system of recognizing participation in professional development activities, giving consideration to incentives, awards and certification; and
- to develop alternate approaches to professional development delivery.

In January 2002, a committee was established to take recommendation 47 of the Ministerial Panel Report as a mandate to develop a Professional Development Alliance. The committee consists of members from the Department of Education, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, Memorial University's Faculty of Education and school districts.

Through a series of meetings between January and June of 2002, the committee developed a working definition of professional development, statements of beliefs and guiding principles and began building a multi-year plan for the Alliance.

A PROPOSED MODEL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ELABORATIONS

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Professional Development Alliance

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