A. Professional Development Schools

Professional development schools (PDS) are innovative institutions formed through partnerships between professional education programs and P–12 schools. Their mission is professional preparation of candidates, faculty development, inquiry directed at the improvement of practice, and enhanced student learning.

B. Rationale

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to make a formal commitment among stakeholders to provide the most effective teaching and learning for students of all ages. By combining resources and working together, the University of Connecticut Neag School of Education (UConn) and participating school districts share the objective of preparing effective teachers who can provide the best educational experiences for student learning at all levels and in all disciplines. Collaborators embark on a process of simultaneous renewal through shared inquiry, professional development, and improved student learning. This process of collaborative growth guarantees optimal learning experiences for all constituents and facilitates the implementation of a seamless Preschool–16 program.

C. Goals

1. Learning community

The PDS will be a learning-centered community that supports the integrated learning and development of P–12 students, candidates, and PDS partners through inquiry-based practice.

   a. Support multiple learners
   b. Ensure that work and practice will be inquiry-based and focused on learning
   c. Develop a common shared professional vision of teaching and learning that will be grounded in research and practitioner knowledge
   d. Serve as instruments of change
   e. Function as an extended learning community

2. Accountability and quality assurance

PDS partners will be accountable to themselves and to the public for upholding professional standards for teaching and learning and demonstrating professionalism.

   a. Develop professional accountability
   b. Assure public accountability
c. Set PDS participation criteria
d. Develop assessments pertaining to UConn students and teacher training programs, collect information, and use results
e. Engage with the PDS context, including other stakeholders and policymakers with whom the PDS is affiliated
f. Recruit, select, and support clinic teachers, cooperating teachers, and intern supervisors who demonstrate and model characteristics and dispositions, such as, imagination, initiative, perseverance, reflection, etc.

3. Collaboration
*PDS partners and partner institutions will systematically move from independent to interdependent practice by committing themselves and committing to each other to engage in joint work focused on implementing the PDS mission.*

a. Engage in joint work
b. Design roles and structures to enhance collaboration and develop parity
c. Systematically recognize and celebrate joint work and contributions of each partner

4. Equity and diversity
*PDS partners and candidates will develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions resulting in learning for all P–12 students.*

a. Ensure equitable opportunities to learn
b. Evaluate policies and practices to support equitable learning outcomes
c. Recruit and support diverse participants

5. Structures, resources and roles
*The PDS partnership will use its authority and resources to articulate its mission and establish governing structures that will support the learning and development of P–12 students, candidates, faculty, and other professionals.*

a. Establish governance and support structures
b. Ensure progress towards goals
c. Create PDS roles, responsibilities, and commitments
d. Generate and share resources
e. Use effective communication
f. Seek to renew and enhance the relationships of the PDS and UConn over time
D. District Commitment

The district of ____________________________ agrees to:

1. Select a formal representative and alternate to the Neag School of Education’s Schools as Clinics Committee and ensure the attendance of the committee representative/alternate at the bi-monthly meetings, whenever possible.

2. Select a Pre-Service Placement Coordinator who will be responsible for overseeing all clinic (junior & senior), student teacher (senior) and intern (fifth year) placements.

3. Identify a Lead Teacher/Site Coordinator in each school who will work with the university in an effort to close the communication feedback loop and to foster improved collaboration.

4. Join with the Neag School of Education in continuing to commit to the agenda and the mission of the National Network of Educational Renewal.

5. Work with the Neag School of Education to establish a special process to give fieldwork priority, not exclusivity, to students from UConn.

6. Recruit, support, and recognize the participation and leadership activities of clinic teachers, cooperating teachers, and internship supervisors.

7. Participate in research, formative assessments, evaluation, and dissemination activities of the Neag School of Education.

8. Receive background check information on all IB/M juniors.
   • If a misdemeanor is indicated, a subcommittee of the Schools as Clinics Committee, with representation from each district, will convene to make decisions based on individual offenses and circumstances. The Chair of the subcommittee will be responsible for organizing these meetings, as university personnel cannot be involved in this decision-making process. The Chair will also be responsible for communicating decisions to the Neag School of Education’s Dean’s Office.

9. Provide updated TEAM training opportunities to faculty who are deemed qualified to become cooperating teachers.
E. University of Connecticut’s Neag School of Education Commitment

The Neag School of Education agrees to:

1. Provide administrative structure: director, office space, secretarial support, and mail and telephone service for school-university partnerships.

2. Provide clinical faculty as liaisons between partnership schools and the Neag School of Education.

3. Recruit and support UConn supervisors to work with cooperating teachers in an effort to help shape and evaluate the student teachers’ fieldwork.

4. Provide representation on the Schools as Clinics Committee.

5. Provide well prepared students for fieldwork.

6. Provide space and funding for select PDS professional development programs and events.

7. Encourage UConn faculty to work with partnership schools and districts.

   - The Neag School of Education will explore more viable ways to connect the partnership schools with colloquium offerings.
   - The Neag School of Education will seek to offer specific professional development opportunities that dovetail with individual school/district needs based on School Improvement Plans.
   - The Neag School will support partnership schools as they seek to provide updated TEAM training to cooperating teachers.

8. Facilitate grant writing and provide information about external funding sources for professional development schools.

9. Provide feedback to partnership schools with regard to the impact they have on IB/M students.

F. Term.
   a. This MOU shall be in effect as of the date last executed by the parties below and shall remain in effect unless and until it is terminated by any party upon sixty (60) days written notice.
   b. All revisions to this MOU may only be made by written amendment executed by all parties.

G. Notices. Any notice required to be given pursuant to the terms of this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be sent, postage prepaid, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the University or Contractor at the addresses
set forth below. The notice shall be effective on the date of delivery indicated on the return receipt.

If to the University:  
University of Connecticut  
________________________  
________________________  
________________________  
Attn: ___________________  

If to the Contractor:  
________________________  
________________________  
________________________  
Attn: ___________________

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Memorandum of Understanding to be executed and certify that they are duly-authorized officers with full authority to execute on behalf of their institution as of the dates indicated below.

University of Connecticut  
Neag School of Education  

Authorized Signature  

Print Name/Title  

Date  

Authorized Signature  

Print Name/Title  

Date  

Authorized Signature  

Print Name/Title  

Date  

Authorized Signature  

Print Name/Title  

Date