



**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York  
Spring 2023 Edition

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS



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BuffaloStatePDS



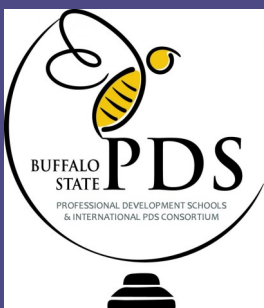
@buffalostatepds

Created by Chloe Mokadam (Graduate Assistant)

## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR



**Dr. Keli Garas-York**  
PDS Director  
Professor,  
Elementary Education,  
Literacy, and  
Educational Leadership  
Program Director,  
Literacy Specialist



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Hello,

The SUNY Buffalo State University PDS consortium is having a busy spring semester. Thanks so much to all who have attended and supported PDS events. We had a successful PDS meeting at South Buffalo Charter School in March. Their hospitality was greatly appreciated. The SBCS partners explained their initiatives with PDS and facilitated a small group activity to glean more information about the initiatives and needs of stakeholders. These ideas will be used to plan future PDS programming and events. It was requested that we provide further information on the PDS Mini-Grant opportunities. The procedures to apply for PDS Mini-Grants are included in this spring newsletter.

The TEUPAC meeting on March 15, 2023, provided further information about the strengths and needs of PDS partner schools, particularly in the areas of science instruction and classroom management. The attendance by school administrators was greatly appreciated. The summer TEUPAC meeting will take place on Zoom on July 27, 2023, at 10:00 am. These meetings are open to all consortium members.

It was a pleasure to have a large group of Buffalo State PDS stakeholders at the annual National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) conference in Jacksonville, Florida in March. The Buffalo State PDS was thrilled to have four partners from PDS schools attend and present at NAPDS. Thank you to Gina Dudkowski, Michelle Heater, Amy Carloni, and Tracy Caruana and the support from their school districts (South Buffalo

**Professional  
Development Schools**  
Bacon Hall 320  
Buffalo State College  
1300 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14222

The Professional Development Schools (PDS) Partnership between the School of Education and the Teacher Education Unit (TEU) at SUNY Buffalo State and participating schools is a collaborative effort. The partnership is dedicated to college faculty, school administrators, practicing teachers, and teacher candidates exploring effective practices to: (a) cooperatively mentor teacher candidates and provide close connections to authentic classroom practice; (b) promote shared professional development for all constituents; (c) impact student learning; and (d) research innovative and best educational practices.

**VISIT US ON THE  
WEB:**

[pds.buffalostate.edu](https://pds.buffalostate.edu)

## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR (CONTINUED)

Charter and Ken-Ton) for joining the Buffalo State group at the conference. Gina Dudkowski won the very prestigious Exemplary PK20 Boundary Spanner Award from NAPDS. Along with Dean Wendy Paterson, several faculty members from Buffalo State presented in Jacksonville. Seven Buffalo State students (undergraduate and graduate) presented their research at the conference. One of the students, graduate assistant, Chloe Mokadam, won a student research award from Information Age Publishing. The Buffalo State PDS group made quite a splash at NAPDS!

Please join us on April 21, 2023, from 9:00-10:30 am for our next PDS meeting at GiGi's Playhouse. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit a remarkable center right here in Buffalo! Along with PDS announcements, you will see a presentation that will focus on the developmental and educational profile of students with Down syndrome, as well as research-based strategies on educating students with Down syndrome in the least restrictive environment. Emily Mondschein, coauthor of "Down Syndrome; Inclusive Education Guidelines", will present on how this guidance document can inform your interaction with individuals with Down Syndrome. During this presentation you will also learn about the only Down Syndrome Achievement Center in WNY, GiGi's Playhouse, and how this local resource can help support families and individuals with Down syndrome. Be sure to RSVP to Keli at [garasyka@buffalostate.edu](mailto:garasyka@buffalostate.edu).

Learn more about the International Professional Development Schools (IPDS) opportunities at Buffalo State. Did you know that IPDS has programs designed for teacher candidates and experienced educators? A group of teachers (experienced educators) just traveled to Colombia over February break to visit schools in Medellin and Cartagena. Join us at Beyond and Back on April 18<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-5:30 in the Student Union (Assembly Hall) to find out how you can be part of IPDS.

Finally, do you know any people who went to school to be a teacher but never got certified? Please let them and others who have decided to come back to teaching know about the Find Your Path Back to Teaching Event on May 3 from 4:30 -6:00 pm. Check out the flyer in this newsletter for more details.

Wishing you a terrific end to your school year!

Keli

SAVE  
THE  
DATE!



# 2023 PDS CONFERENCE

Registration  
will open in  
July. The  
conference  
is a FREE  
event!



FRIDAY  
09/29/23

# Buffalo State University

## PDS Conference

### 2023

## Call for Proposals

### Due 6/1/23



**Paired Concurrent Session:** 20-minute professional presentation of school-university partnership work to inform PDS Consortium members of best practices and/or action research paired with another 20-minute session each followed by a five-minute discussion

**Poster Session:** visual display exploring an educational topic (posters displaying undergraduate and graduate student research are welcome)

**Note: Special preference will be given to proposals that are submitted jointly among the various constituencies of the PDS (faculty, mentor teachers, school/community-based leadership, and/or teacher candidates).**

Please submit the following information by June 1, 2023

- Names of all presenters
- Email addresses of all presenters
- Preferred session type (Paired Concurrent or Poster)
- Title of presentation
- 3-4 sentence description of the presentation

**Submit Here:** <https://tinyurl.com/2w6f3t8c> or use the QR code





## BUFFALO STATE AT NAPDS JACKSONVILLE



### Attendees

**School Partners:** Tracy Caruana, Gina Dudkowski, Michelle Heater, and Amy Carloni

**Teacher Candidates:** Chloe Mokadam, Jennifer Greene, Brandon Garcia, Hailee Cipollina, Cassie Thurn, Summer Grandinetti, and Sofia Fanizzi

**Buffalo State Faculty/Staff:** Pixita del Prado Hill, Mary Lavin, Krista Vince Garland, Jennifer Reichenberg, Patty George, Brandon Kawa, Andrew Hashey, and Keli Garas-York

**Dean:** Wendy Paterson

### Award Winners

**Chloe Mokadam**

Buffalo State

IAP Action Research Award

**Gina Dudkowski**

South Buffalo Charter School

Exemplary PK20 Boundary Spanner Award





## BUFFALO STATE AT NAPDS JACKSONVILLE (CONTINUED)





## BUFFALO STATE AT NAPDS JACKSONVILLE (CONTINUED)



**Do you know an undergraduate student early in their program who would make a great PDS representative?**

Let us know so they can join us at next year's NAPDS Conference!

**Email Keli Garas-York at:**

**[garasyka@buffalostate.edu](mailto:garasyka@buffalostate.edu)**

Serving as a PDS Student Representative (PDS Rep) is a rewarding, collaborative, and educational experience through which students build their resumes, develop their teacher candidate voice, and take advantage of opportunities for professional development and networking.



## PDS INITIATIVES



### EDU 310 at the Charles Drew Annex School Multicultural Night

Mrs. Elias's EDU 310 class volunteered their time to plan, organize, collaborate, and execute amazing student-centered activity tables at the Charles Drew Annex School Multicultural Night. They were interactive and welcoming to both children and families and were consummate professionals that represented Buffalo State so well. The event was a huge success with lots of smiles and fun had by all the families that attended. The books and supplies for this event were provided through a PDS Action Research Mini-Grant. Kudos to Misty Bowman, Gracie Cognion, Grace Czyz, Cassie Fowler, Talia Fraizer-Washington, Lucy Kloefer, Jersey Neff, Thun Phyo, Rachel Pokornowski, Malaka Slaughter, Chloe Solomon, Carmen Spencer, Jenna Zamrok, & Stephanie Ziccarelli and, of course, Mrs. Elias.

By: Crystal Elias

## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

### Buffalo State PDS Partners with the Center for Teaching and Learning in Edgecomb, Maine

We are excited to announce the new PDS partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in Edgecomb, Maine. This program is a unique and academically rich opportunity for Buffalo State teacher candidates to study reading and writing workshop theory and pedagogy. The CTL is a one-of-a-kind K-8 school based on the work of Buffalo State alum, Nancie Atwell. Nancie's instructional methods, which focused on workshop models of teaching and learning, transformed literacy instruction in schools. The school she founded implements these approaches across all content areas and grade levels.

Professors James Cercone and Kristen Pastore-Capuana led a team of English education and elementary education undergrad and graduate students to CTL in January 2023 to engage in this internship program where they observed classrooms at CTL, collaborated with CTL teachers and students, and learned from school administrators and curricular leaders about the cutting-edge cross-curricular literacy practices and portfolio assessment at CTL. Carolyn Freeman, Bailey Buckley, Max Wagner, Zachary Ogren, Jarrett Whipple, and Emilee Misener also engaged in analysis of student writing and participated in conferencing with CTL students. Prior to the internship, participants read Nancie Atwell's seminal work, *In the Middle*, and participated in workshops exploring the theoretical foundations of workshop practices.





## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

The Buffalo State teachers and teacher candidates are excited to implement what they learned at CTL in local classrooms. The next PDS Maine internship is in the works for the 2023-2024 academic year. Please reach out to Dr. Cercone ([cerconje@buffalostate.edu](mailto:cerconje@buffalostate.edu)) or Dr. Pastore-Capuana ([pastorka@buffalostate.edu](mailto:pastorka@buffalostate.edu)) if you are interested in becoming involved with this program.

By: Dr. Jim Cercone and Dr. Kristen Pastore-Capuana



## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

### International Literary Society:

#### A Focus on Literacy Skills and Social and Emotional Learning at the 5th Grade Level

Social and emotional skills can have a profound impact on academic skill development. Effective facilitation of social and emotional learning (SEL) often involves integrating SEL skill development within academic curriculum. We connected two PDS partner schools to create an international literary society - a cross-cultural exchange to support the development of literacy and SEL across two cohorts of 5th grade students. The two schools involved in this project were Tapestry Charter School in Buffalo, and the School of Nations in Brasilia, Brazil. The cross-cultural exchange of ideas and sharing of perspectives was central to our project, and this cross-pollination was facilitated through various opportunities including engagement with Padlet and via the Anne Frank Project's Virtual Lab.

To support literacy skill development, students in both groups read and explored the book "My name is Jason. Mine too.", and created poetry and artwork that reflected themselves and their learning experience. Through art and poetry, the mixed-media book "My name is Jason. Mine too." tells a story about friendship and social support between two people that had many commonalities, as well as individual differences. In some ways, the story is mirrored in our

literary society. The students from Buffalo and Brasilia had opportunity to learn from each other. They had opportunities to develop literary skills, and social-cognitive and emotional skills including theory of mind, social awareness, empathy, and an improved "global perspective".





## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

On May 1, 2023, Jason Reynolds (the author of the book we used for our international literary society), a #1 New York Times bestselling author, will be visiting and speaking on campus as part of the Bulger Lectureship Series. Students from the international literary society will be in attendance (in person, and virtually from Brazil) and they are excited to see and meet the person who created the book that got them so hooked on reading poetry and thinking about how environment and culture can influence an individual.

### Exploring our emotions to better understand ourselves and others through poetry.

quote, Kamari, Jaliyah



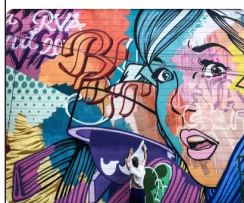
"I can see a child, falling down with pain, a gift I guess."  
I like this quote because it says true things that other people can relate to in a unique way.

explanation, Kamari, Jaliyah



This quote stood out to me in a strong powering way that represented me.

Za'Miyah & Kelsie



"Felt like freedom" i picked this because it is important to have freedom of yourself and body - Za'Miyah

"Self " I picked because you always should be yourself everytime and everyday-Kelsie

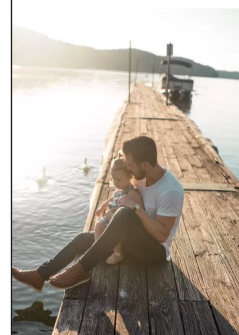
Mariah washington



"...Ain't no heaven in this city  
If all you do is hide."

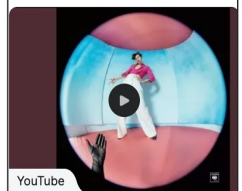
This is like, if someone is bullying you or just being mean don't cry or hide, stand up for yourself. Because if you don't they will know that it affects you and they will keep doing it.

Xavia



The poem "Men Pretend" makes me mad because it is sexist. Men can do anything they put their minds to. You are still a man if you write poetry and pant and dance and hug and kiss and like and love and listen. PS: kiss your wife before you go to work. Hug your kids and be a man.

Elise Vorenkamp



YouTube

Adore You

'Because it's just  
So hard  
To explain to people  
That my life  
Is not unhard  
But not unhappy'.

I chose this quote because i relate to it my life is not not hard But it is not not not happy.

olivia



"Like grow legs and walk Grow arms and hold someone Wrap them in wonderfals And other good words"

I think this poem means comfort /happy/loved.because it feels like its giving me a hug.

David



" Life is Good " I picked this beacuse its true. I like hanging ou with my friends and family, they make like fun and enjoyable. we enjoy games. I like to be alone some times as well.

olivia



"There's paint on everything he's touched And every moment of his life"

i think this poem means to leave your creative mind around the world.

## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

This project would not have been possible without the contributions from our Buffalo State community. We would like to thank the students from Judi Harris' Fall 2022 EXE371 class for their amazing work as they are the ones who worked directly with the students throughout this project. In addition, we would like to thank STITCH Buffalo for providing support for the textile art projects, and Drew Khan for the opportunity to use the Anne Frank Project's Virtual Lab to connect our two groups in real-time, which ensured this was a very memorable experience for them. This project was funded by a PDS mini-grant, which was used to purchase books and art supplies.

By: Dr. Gehan Senthinathan and Judi Harris

**Collaborating with STITCH Buffalo to create one big piece of art that represents all of us and our learning experience – our story!**



## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

### Professional Development Schools:

#### Responding To Student Needs Post Covid

At the start of every semester, Professional Development Liaison Teams (made up of Buffalo State Faculty and local school district faculty and staff) collaborate to determine what practices they will design and implement to positively influence the growth of teacher candidates and the P-12 students they serve. This year Liaison Teams were presented with a clear and pressing need: to address the huge declines in student performance due to the past three years of interrupted schooling. The challenges faced were daunting and too numerous for any one entity to shoulder alone. This unfortunate situation provided the perfect opportunity for Buffalo State and schools throughout Western New York to join together and help students rebound after the pandemic.

One creative example of how a PDS school responded to this challenge, was developed by The Liaison Team at Cleveland Hill Elementary School. Collaboratively, they tackled the question “What support beyond the classroom can we put in place to address the widening gap that exists for students who lack critical reading skills?”. Their solution was to develop a before-school tutoring program called “Rise and Read!”. This morning tutoring program is held on the same two days that Buffalo State teacher candidates are completing their Literacy Practicum at Clevehill. The schedule allows candidates to tutor before attending their class. Interested Buffalo State teacher candidates applied, interviewed, and were hired as literacy tutors. The candidates provide targeted instruction to small groups of Clevehill students, under the guidance of Clevehill’s Literacy Instructional Coach. The goal of this tutoring program is to help students close the achievement gap by acquiring the essential skills needed to successfully access/meet grade level standards in ELA.

This innovative collaboration is a win-win for everyone! Clevehill Elementary students have gained an extra two hours a week to learn essential literacy skills - helping to close the gap in their performance. Buffalo State teacher candidates are delivering meaningful reading interventions to elementary students and watching them grow; while also earning a few extra dollars. This authentic experience has contributed to the candidate’s professional knowledge and has increased their confidence. Candidates are thrilled to have been hired as a tutor while having the opportunity to benefit from the clinical support provided by Buffalo State’s faculty and the district reading staff.

By: Mary Lavin



## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

### Workshops with Dr. Nanci Monaco

Dr. Nanci Monaco has been an Associate Professor in the Department of Elementary Education, Literacy, and Educational Leadership since 2000. She is a licensed New York State Psychologist (child) and recently completed a sabbatical year studying the effects of COVID on children and families. She has developed several one-hour workshops which she has been offering at schools and community agencies. If your school is interested in hosting an interactive workshop on any of the following topics please call her at **(716) 698-9933** or email her at **monaconm@buffalostate.edu** to discuss a collaboration. There is no cost associated with the workshops.



Some examples are:

- 1) Children and increasing anxiety: Causes, actions teachers and parents can take to reduce stress, children's insight into their anxiety, misdiagnoses of anxiety disorders, etc.
- 2) The aftermath of the pandemic: Social emotional and cognitive changes that linger after the pandemic and what teachers and parents might do to aid in a return to less stressful times
- 3) Children and gun violence: How to make active school shooter drills less anxiety provoking, how to discuss this topic in developmentally appropriate ways, how to help children identify and report problematic or violent behaviors in classmates, and studies of thwarted school shootings
- 4) School bullying and DASA: What has worked and what still needs to be addressed 10 years later.
- 5) The Yale Happiness Study: and other research on promoting happiness. Lessons for teachers and parents.

By: Dr. Nanci Monaco



## PDS INITIATIVES (CONTINUED)

### How Can a PDS Welcome Buffalo State Junior Participants (JPs) and Help Them Feel a Sense of Belonging in the School?

In early March, Liza Bair's EDU 316 class was eager to begin their elementary mathematics field experience at Windermere Boulevard Elementary School (Amherst Central Schools). During an orientation tour of the school, the Junior Participants (JPs) learned about Windermere Wednesdays. On Windermere Wednesdays, students and staff at the school show their school spirit by wearing



Windermere gear. To welcome the JPs to the school, the Windermere Mentor Teachers surprised the class by announcing each JP would receive a Windermere t-shirt to wear each week. This surprise spoke volumes to the JPs. Megan Otis, a junior majoring in Early Childhood and Childhood Education, described how she felt after the first day by saying "We felt very welcomed at Windermere even before we were given the shirts," and added, "I feel very proud to wear the Windermere t-shirts each week." Malina Lancaster, a senior majoring in Childhood Education, echoed that sentiment by saying, "The t-shirt made me feel like a part of the school family." Melissa Rufus, a junior majoring in Childhood Education, further explained, "It was like we were already part of the team even though it was our first week." The JPs would like to thank the Windermere Mentor Teachers for this kind and welcoming gesture and would also like to give a special shout out to Miss Grace Licata, a Windermere Mentor Teacher and Buffalo State Alumna (B.S. '19, M.S. Ed '22), for making the 14 t-shirts.

By: Liza Bair

# PDS Mini-Grants

Do you have a creative project, initiative, or idea that includes Buffalo State teacher candidates?

## Apply for a PDS Mini-Grant!

1. Meet with your liaison team to plan your project.
2. Go to the Buffalo State PDS website ([pds.buffalostate.edu](http://pds.buffalostate.edu)).
3. Click on Action Research Mini-Grants (left).
4. Scroll to view the two types of grants - Action Research (up to \$1200) and Co-teaching (up to \$300).
5. Decide which type of mini-grant best fits your project or idea.
6. Click the link in the description for either type of mini-grant to access application instructions.
7. Complete the application and email it to Keli at [garasyka@buffalostate.edu](mailto:garasyka@buffalostate.edu).
8. Scroll to the bottom of the page to check out examples of past projects!

**If you have any questions about this process please contact Keli at [garasyka@buffalostate.edu](mailto:garasyka@buffalostate.edu).**





Down Syndrome Achievement Centers  
educate. inspire. believe.



**You are invited to a PDS meeting  
on Friday April 21, 2023**

✦ **at GIGI's Playhouse  
from 9:00-10:30 am**

**Light refreshments will be served.**

**326 Kenmore Ave, Buffalo 14224**

**Please RSVP to**

**garasyka@buffalostate.edu**

This presentation will focus on the developmental and educational profile of students with Down syndrome, as well as research-based strategies on educating students with Down syndrome in the least restrictive environment. Emily Mondschein, coauthor of "Down Syndrome; Inclusive Education Guidelines", will present on how this guidance document can inform your interaction with individuals with Down Syndrome. During this presentation you will also learn about the only Down Syndrome Achievement Center in WNY, GiGi's Playhouse, and how this local resource can help support families and individuals with Down syndrome.





# BEYOND & BACK

WHERE CAN BUFFALO STATE TAKE YOU?

**TUESDAY, APRIL 18**

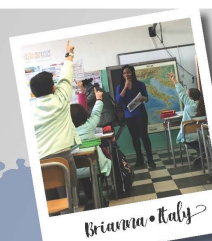
**4:00 PM - 5:30 PM**

**STUDENT UNION ASSEMBLY HALLS**

Students, Staff, and Faculty are invited to this annual open house event to explore IPDS including...

- inter-semester study away programs for those aspiring to work in educational settings
- international student teaching placements | international teaching paths
- scholarships & funding | application process & deadlines
- an alumni panel discussion and alumni poster presentations!

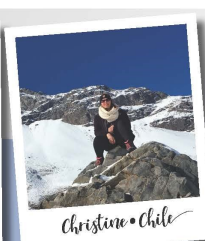
The SUNY Buffalo State [International Professional Development Schools \(IPDS\)](#) is a campus-wide initiative sponsored by the School of Education PDS Consortium. IPDS seeks to increase intercultural competency, explore language learning, and develop high quality educators able to support the needs of all learners. Through professional development events and activities, IPDS aims to help professionals working with children and youth to build knowledge, skills, and dispositions for global understanding.



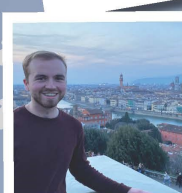
*Brianna • Italy*



*Crystal • Honduras*



*Christine • Chile*



*Nick • Sierra*



*visiting • Colombia teachers*



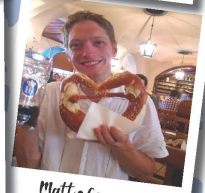
*Julisa • Dominican*



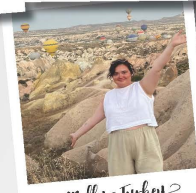
*sloth! • Costa Rica*



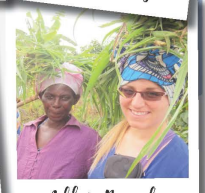
*safari 2018 • Zambia*



*Matt • Germany*



*Molly • Turkey*



*Ashley • Rwanda*

# FIND YOUR PATH BACK TO TEACHING

**Wed, May 3**  
**4:30 - 6:00 PM**  
**Buffalo State Science &  
Math Complex Atrium**

Open House for anyone who began  
a teacher certification program,  
but did not complete:

- ⇒ all of the program requirements
- ⇒ the necessary teacher certification exams\*
- ⇒ a masters program within five years
- ⇒ the New York State certification application
- ⇒ other unique situations!

*\* edTPA no longer required in NYS*

Through **Find Your Path Back to Teaching** the Buffalo State Teacher Education Unit provides a pathway for individuals who started, but did not fully complete, program or certification requirements to become a New York State certified teacher. **Find Your Path Back to Teaching** participants receive an individualized assessment, advisement, pathway, and multiple systems of support.



TEACHER EDUCATION UNIT  
BUFFALO STATE - The State University of New York

<https://schools.education.buffalostate.edu/find-your-path-back-teaching>



**Are you  
ready to  
get into the  
classroom?**

Gather details from Buffalo State faculty and administrators poised to make this program - and you - a success at our 3rd Open House FYPBT event!

**Register to  
Find Out More!**



Thank you to all who contributed to the writing of  
the newsletter!