

**PARTNER SCHOOL NETWORK INITIATIVE  
A COLLABORATION AMONG  
BURKE, COLUMBIA, JEFFERSON, MCDUFFIE, RICHMOND,  
WARREN, and LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEMS &  
AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Partner School Network initiative is intended to create a coherent, completely collaborative and comprehensive entity through which both initial and advanced study for educational professionals is provided. The educator preparation programs encompassed by this initiative include initial teacher certification programs for early childhood; middle grades; special education; secondary English, history, mathematics, sciences, and social studies; P-12 foreign language and music education; and advanced professional study for teachers at the master's degree and specialist degree levels. The collaborating partners in this initiative include six area school districts: Burke, Columbia, Jefferson, McDuffie, Richmond, Lincoln, Warren Counties and Augusta University.

## **GOALS**

The Partner School Network Initiative has four overarching goals:

**I. Implement curriculum undertaken in the school of education.**

The curriculums have been collaboratively developed and are built around the Instate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards for initial certification programs, and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) principles for certifying teachers and teacher leaders.

**II. Collaboratively create a sustainable network of Partner School Network schools within the partner districts.** The development of the PSN network took place within the framework of the functions and attributes of Partner Schools as identified by National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It continues under the accreditation rules of the Georgia Professional Services Commission.

**III. Create a viable decision-making process that includes representatives of all collaborating partners (at school and institutional levels) and that will be responsible for implementation, evaluation and refinement of the initiative.** Each Partner School has identified a master teacher, administrator, or professional staff member as its building coordinator who works with a similarly assigned university coordinator and the school's administration on such tasks as the assignment of educator preparation students, selection of master teachers,

coordination of seminars and workshops, and identification of issues and concerns arising from the initiative's implementation.

**IV. Create a comprehensive communication network through which collaborating partners convey information, jointly pursue academic and professional development, model varied uses of technology for instructional and professional development purposes, provide to members of the collaboration data and insights related to student performances and achievement, link up with state, national, and international resources and colleagues.**

## **CURRENT STATUS**

The Partner School Network initiative includes fifty nine schools from the seven participating districts, including thirty three elementary schools, twelve middle schools, thirteen high schools, and one K-8 school. These schools represent the socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and demographic diversity of the Central Savannah River Area. The Partner School Network initiative is a wholly collaborative and emergent undertaking through which the partners are continually defining, designing, implementing and refining themselves. The Partner Schools strive to represent best practice in assisting all students to achieve to high academic standards, as those are identified in the Georgia Performance Standards, national content standards, district, and school level expectations. Teachers' best practices in the Partner Schools also demonstrate reflective, well informed, varied instructional and assessment practices, a collegially supportive atmosphere that encourages teachers and university faculty to stay current in the applications of professional research, and to model professional commitment to life-long learning.

The Partner Schools are collaborative partners with Augusta University in designing and delivering the field experience components of the various educator preparation programs offered through the university. Clinical/collaborating teachers in the Partner Schools supervise and evaluate teacher education students' culminating student teaching experience and coordinate with AU faculty the reflective seminars that are taken in demonstration lessons in teacher preparation courses. Undergraduate educator preparation students who are completing their coursework are assigned to the faculties of the Partner Schools for the intensive five week lab component of their courses.

## AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY PARTNER SCHOOL NETWORK

### **FUNCTIONS:**

- Pre-service Teacher Preparation
- Staff Development
- Research
- Support for P-12 Students' Learning

At its core the PSN is about the integration of these functions. This integration creates new kinds of work for all participants who share the roles of teachers, learners, researchers, and teacher educators.

### **ATTRIBUTES OF THE PSN:**

- **Learning Community:** The PSN is a learning-centered community characterized by norms and practices which support adult and children's learning. Indications of a learning-centered community include: public teaching practice; integration of apprentice and teacher learning with school instructional program; collegiality; inquiry; and dissemination of new knowledge. Opportunities to learn are equitably supported.
- **Collaboration:** The PSN is characterized by joint work between and among schools and university faculty directed at implementing the mission. Responsibility for learning is shared; research is jointly defined and implemented; all participants share expertise in the interests of children's and adults' learning.
- **Accountability and Quality Assurance:** The PSN is accountable to the public and to the profession for upholding professional standards for teaching and learning and for preparing new teachers in accordance with these standards.
- **Organization, Roles, and Structures:** The PSN uses processes and allocates resources and time to systemize the continuous improvement of learning to teach.
- **Equity and Diversity:** The PSN is characterized by norms and practices which support equity and learning by all students and adults.

**AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY  
PARTNER SCHOOL NETWORK INITIATIVE**

Partner schools are learning environments that support student, teacher, and faculty development within the context of student achievement. Our goals are to initiate and maintain a strong, partner school framework among our existing P-12 teachers, preservice teachers, and our local area school districts to ensure success in our schools.

The Partner School Network (PSN) is a learning-centered community that supports the commitment of the school, school district and the university to a basic mission emphasizing integrated learning and development of P-12 students, teacher candidates, and PSN partners through inquiry-based practices. PSN partners share a common vision of teaching and learning grounded in research and practitioner knowledge. Fostering collaboration among school systems, parents, teachers, the University and the community at large is critical to the field of education. We believe that all participants will benefit in this collaboration, beginning with our children in the schools. Your school has been highly recommended to us, and we would like for you to join us in this initiative.