Exhibit 3.4.a.3.c: Towson University Professional Development Schools

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Brief History

- Established in 1994
- First school was Owings Mills Elementary
- Now the network has 125 schools in 12 school systems
Towson PDS Network

- Goal is high quality teacher education

- Follows the:
  - NCATE PDS Standards
  - Maryland Standards for PDS
  - National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) Essential Standards
Primary Goals

- Maximize student achievement
- Inquiry and refinement of effective practices in teaching and learning
- Prepare student interns to become successful, student-centered, and professional educators
- Focus on the School Improvement Plan of the local school to determine the needs of students
Towson University PDS

- Produces the largest number of teachers in Maryland (over 600 annually)

- Graduates receive certification in:
  - Early childhood
  - Elementary education
  - Special education
    - Dual major in elementary education and special education (EESE)
    - Dual major in early childhood and special education
  - Secondary education (13 certification programs)
  - K-12 certification in art, dance library media, music and physical education
Internship

- **Prior to the Professional year students:**
  - Observe in local schools
  - Have opportunities to participate in classes focused in math, science, and language arts
  - Work with students under the direct guidance of a teacher for either ½ day or a full day per week

- **Professional year:**
  - Year long internship
  - Final semester five days a week
  - Immersed in the realities of the school culture
  - Typically work in several schools (two 8 week rotations)
  - Towson faculty liaison—bridge between the public school and TU
Collaboration

- Meetings are held with:
  - Site-based teacher coordinator
  - Mentor teachers
  - University faculty/liaisons
  - Annual principals’ dinner
  - We also meet with any principal that request information or assistance when asked
  - Each local PDS school also has a PDS Council comprised of the site coordinator, mentor teachers, the TU liaison and a representative from the administration
School systems take advantage of our ability to offer off campus graduate course at reduced rates

- Focus is on school system priority areas (school improvement plan)
- Courses
- Workshops
- Faculty meetings
- Study groups (we offer money for supplementary materials)

  - For example a group of mentors and interns may read a book together on the topic of classroom management. They then discuss what was read and try to implement key elements in the classroom.
Strategic planning is held every summer
- Looks at data from the School Improvement Plan and plan the focus and school goals for the year
- The strategic planning group is comprised of:
  - Liaisons, site coordinators, mentor teachers, interns, and at times members of the community
  - Meetings are held in the local school and TU pays for refreshments and the participants time
  - Representatives from the school and the TU liaison then use the School Improvement Plan and test results to determine the priorities for the next year.
  - The strategic plan is then shared with the administration and mentor teachers
  - At the end of the year a state mandated report, the Teacher Preparation Improvement Plan (TPIP) is used to determine the success of the strategic planning.
Why are you here?

One outcome of the TU strategic planning was:

- Engage representatives from the local education agencies (LEA) and TU to look at issues impacting both the University and the school systems.

For example:

- Charter schools
- Increased presence in “urban schools”
- How to increase research in public schools
- Impact of technology
- Dealing with decreased hiring of teachers
The success of the PDS Network requires cooperation between Towson University and our public school partners.

The crux of our partnership is based on joint planning, and a desire to help all students learn.

Through the efforts of the PDS network we have graduates who are making a difference in schools throughout the state and the country.
In 2003, Maryland’s State Superintendent of Schools declared that Towson’s “College of Education has clearly established itself as Maryland's flagship teacher education institution, and in doing so is now a national leader. Its excellence has been marked through its professional development school accolades. . . . The College of Education has shown my staff, Maryland local school systems, and the teacher education community nationwide how to improve teaching and learning for K-16 students in professional development schools. Your teacher education students are ready to teach upon graduation and are much more like second year teachers than their predecessors...
Award Winning Network

- 1998—*Distinguished Program in Teacher Education* (Association of Teacher Educators)
- 2005—*Excellence Award for Educational Programs* (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development)
- 2008—*Edward C. Pomeroy Award for Outstanding Contribution to Teacher Education* (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education)
- 2008—*Spirit of Partnership Award* (National Association of Professional Development Schools)
- 2008—*Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teacher Education* (American Association of State Colleges and Universities)