Teacher/Faculty Collaborative Projects

In the fall of 2011, the Watson School of Education, Professional Development System Office hosted a Regional Education Forum. At this forum, nine school districts engaged in dialogue about the state of education in this region. From those conversations, the PDS office established the Teacher Collaborative Projects initiative. These projects will support teachers’ cross district collaborative efforts to implement innovative practices in classrooms, schools, and/or communities. These are research projects intended to encourage in-depth study and critical reflection that leads to a change in the way teachers work with students, communities, and/or families.

This year, there are twelve teachers from seven schools in three counties represented (Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender). Teachers are on three teams, each with different focus areas. Each team is also paired with two faculty facilitators. Faculty facilitators will facilitate dialogue and assist with project implementation and a final research presentation at our spring Research Speaks conference at the Watson School of Education. Dr. Amy Moody is the lead faculty facilitator for the projects. She will assist teams with preparing to present at the Research Speaks Conference on April 18th and with submitting external teacher grant applications.

Team 1: Authentic Assessment
Cape Fear Center for Inquiry and Burgaw Middle

Team 2: Multimedia/Technology Integration
East Columbus High and Ashley High School

Team 3: True Arts Integration
Heide Trask High, Pender High, Ashley High and Holly Shelter Middle School
Dr. Jeanne Swafford, associate professor in the Department of Elementary, Middle Level, & Literacy Education, taught from January 3rd-February 16th in fourth grade at Cape Fear Center for Inquiry. She taught in Amanda Benton’s classroom while Ms. Benton spent six weeks in Peru. Dr. Swafford believes “it is important for professors to experience the realities of 21st century classrooms in order to put theory into practice in elementary school classrooms, share firsthand experiences with UNCW students, and collect data for instructional videos.” Indeed, Dr. Swafford’s work models the type of collaborative work that we hope to have between UNCW and our P-12 school partners!

Dr. Candace Thompson, assistant professor in the Department of Instructional Technology, Foundations, and Secondary Education, spends much of her time in our P-12 schools. On February 10th, she stopped by Blair Elementary School to read Jack Tales (NC Appalachian tradition) to 4th grade students in the media center. Her “production” was indeed a collaborative one with other faculty chipping in to help her prepare. Thanks to Marsha Carr from the Department of Educational Leadership for providing the hat and Brian Brinkley, the Director of the Education Lab, for providing the books!

Rebecca Ham (Right), partnership teacher at Acme Delco Elementary School, receives the 2011-12 Roy Harkin Teacher Recognition Award. She poses here with principal Janet Hedrick (Left)

The Teacher Recognition Award was established in 2008 in memory of Dr. Roy E. Harkin. Dr. Harkin served as the chair of the Education Department at UNCW from 1976 to 1979. In 1979 the department became the School of Education, and Dr. Harkin was named as the first dean. He served as Dean until 1991. This award is funded by the family and friends of Dr. Harkin in recognition of his commitment to partnerships with public schools and his appreciation for the contributions of public school educators to teacher education programs and the preparation of prospective teachers. The award is designed to recognize a public school teacher who has contributed to the preparation of future teachers by demonstrating excellence as a partnership teacher and/or site coordinator.

As part of the guidelines for this award, we established a process of randomly selecting a county in which the current semester award will be determined. That county will then not be eligible for selection again until all counties have been represented. For fall 2011, Columbus County was selected in this process.
Spotlight on our Partners

Camp Lejeune Schools:
◊ Ms. Julia Eckl Goodrich, Third Grade Teacher
  Gordon Elementary School, DDESS North Carolina District, Fort Bragg
  DDESS North Carolina 2012 Teacher of the Year.

Columbus County Schools:
◊ At the January 17th Columbus County Board of Education meeting, Tabor
  City Elementary School was recognized nationally as a Title I Distinguished School for closing
  the achievement gap among student subgroups.
◊ Mr. Terry Dudney, Finance Director of Columbus County Schools was recognized as
  Administrator of the Year by the North Carolina Association of Educational Office
  Professionals.

Duplin County Schools:
◊ Duplin County Schools celebrate “Love the Bus Week” by asking parents and staff to honor bus
  drivers this week.

New Hanover County Schools:
◊ Will host 18th Annual “Coming Together Conference” on February 20th. Each year, local, state
  and national presenters share and educate parents, teachers, administrators, community members
  and other professionals on the latest information and issues concerning the education of students
  with disabilities. Participants also are informed about support groups, agencies, and up-to-date
  information on serving children with disabilities.

Onslow County:
◊ Dixon High School is one of the first schools in the state to introduce 3D into the classroom. Currently, the 3-D learning is being utilized in the math and science classes.

Pender County:
◊ Eighteen teachers received the Star News Media Grant. Teachers had to write a 300-word essay
  about innovative ways they incorporate the StarNews' e-Edition, an electronic replication of the
  daily newspaper, into their classes.

Seeking Spotlight News: If you have special initiatives to highlight or individuals that you would like to recognize from your school and/or district, please email them to Donyell Roseboro at roseborod@uncw.edu by the last day of the month. We will do our best to include your items in a Coaching Connections newsletter.