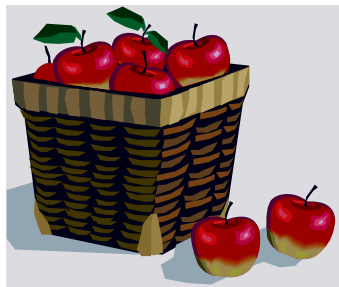

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Contents

Message from the Editors.....	4
-------------------------------	---

Articles

Faculty to Faculty Collaboration and Student to Student Mentoring: Pre-service and In-service Teachers Using Electronic Journals to Dialogue about the Foundations of Literacy Instruction	5
--	---

Lisa Henderson, Ph.D.

Rochelle Berndt, M.A. Ed..

Collaborating to Share Resources and Pedagogy: Interdisciplinary Intercollegiate Faculty Learning Circles.....	13
---	----

Helene Arbouet Harte, Ed. D.

Lisa Bauer, Ed.D.

Karin Schumacher Dyke, Ed.D.

Sue Griebeling, Ed. D.

Elizabeth Moore, Ed. D.

Growing Social Responsibility Through Service Learning and Challenge Days	21
--	----

Julie Mc Intosh , Ed. D.

Sandra H. White

Kimberly Bash

The Preservice Teacher's Web 2.0 Tool Kit.....	25
--	----

Sarah McCorkle, M.Ed.

Book Review

<i>The Beautiful Tree</i> by James Tooley	29
---	----

Terry C. Miller, Ed. D.

Ohio Association of Teacher Education Membership Invitation	32
---	----

Journal Guidelines.....	35
-------------------------	----

A Message from the Editors.....

The Fall 2010 issue of The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education has an open theme. The articles cover a range of topics of interest to teacher educators such as mentoring, learning circles, shared inquiry through co-teaching and build social responsibility through service-learning projects, Web 2.0 tools for teacher candidates, and community schools among the world's poor.

The first article by Harte and Berndt describes a collaborative project developed by an adjunct and full-time faculty member, and completed by undergraduate pre-service and graduate in-service teachers enrolled in their respective literacy courses at Baldwin-Wallace College in the fall 2009 semester. Critical colleague pairings were established between the in-service and pre-service teachers who were expected to read and react to professional literacy articles. This study includes the analysis of the dialogue, types of responses, and mentoring relationships established between the participants. The researchers also share their perspectives, as well as personal insights gained from the collaborative planning and implementation of the study.

The next article by Harte, Bauer, Dyke, Griebing, and Moore reflects on the experiences of members of a faculty-learning circle that includes faculty from several universities collaborating to combine knowledge to improve practice. They explore benefits, challenges, and implications. The next steps in the process include focusing their efforts on participating in the academy, perfecting their own classroom pedagogy for their higher education students, and collaborating to take advantage of all of their expertise.

The third article by McIntosh, White and Bash discusses how every community faces challenges and service-learning projects can help identify and meet community needs. Service learning engages students and teacher candidates, incorporates reflective activities and analyzes results of the project. This article presents several programs implemented in Findlay, Ohio that promote youth philanthropy.

The fourth article by McCorkle examines technology services that were once limited to costly software packages. Web2.0 allows those with limited technical ability and/or funding to combine multimedia in ways that were unimaginable a decade ago. Through appropriate modeling by faculty within college and university coursework, the seed of instructional technology will be planted and ready to thrive long before teachers reach their own classrooms.

Finally, Miller shares a book review about how cooperative, community schools are educating the poor globally. It tells of the educational challenges of helping children, families, and communities create affirming learning environments that support all young people to thrive with the skills to fully participate in society. As well as, reminding us that all children deserve the opportunity to enhance their futures through access to quality education.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the journal, and we hope you find these articles and book review to be informative and helpful in your various roles preparing teacher educators.

Sarah Cecire
Virginia McCormack

Faculty to Faculty Collaboration and Student to Student Mentoring: Pre-service and In-service Teachers Using Electronic Journals to Dialogue about the Foundations of Literacy Instruction

Lisa Henderson, Ph.D. and Rochelle Berndt, M.A. Ed.

The term mentor originated with Homer, who, in The Odyssey tells of Odysseus, King of Ithaca. Upon leaving for battle in the Trojan War, Odysseus placed his son Telemachus in the care of Mentor, who served as a teacher and caregiver. In contemporary lexicon, the word "mentor" has become synonymous with a trusted advisor, friend, teacher, and wise person.

Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy, and personal know-how assisting the growth and ability of another person (Shea, 2001). A specific form of mentoring known as learning-focused mentoring is most effective for novices entering a profession. This relationship frames the learning journey from novice to expert (Lipton & Wellman, 2003). Learning-focused mentoring relationships can make a significant emotional and intellectual difference in the educational experiences of pre-service teachers, as well as in their continuing professional practice. Based on the work of Daloz (1999), a mentor's role within a learning-focused mentoring relationship involves a balance among three functions. These functions include offering support, creating challenge, and facilitating a professional vision. Thus, learning-focused mentoring offered by in-service teachers provides the following benefits to pre-service teachers: increased efficacy in problem-solving; engagement in collaborative dialogue regarding best practices; and retention in teacher education programs.

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe a collaborative project developed by an adjunct and

full time faculty member and completed by graduate in-service teachers and undergraduate pre-service teachers enrolled in their respective literacy courses at a private, liberal arts institution. The research describes mentoring relationships that developed as a result of interactions between critical colleagues engaged in electronic journal dialogues about the foundations of literacy instruction. The in-service teachers who were enrolled in a graduate literacy course, entitled "Foundations of Reading and Language Arts" served as mentors for pre-service teachers who were enrolled in an undergraduate literacy course entitled, "The Teaching of Phonics." This paper focuses on both the faculty to faculty collaborations involved in designing the project, as well as the purposes and factors in the mentoring of pre-service teachers.

Theoretical Framework

Social constructivism and Lev Vygotsky's notion of learning through social interactions with more knowledgeable others are central to the success of pre-service and in-service teachers. Additionally, reflective thinking and collaborative models of teacher preparation provide the theoretical framework that undergirds the electronic journaling project.

Social Constructivism

According to Kim (2001), the premises of knowledge and learning underlie the theory of social constructivism. Knowledge is socially and culturally constructed, and meaning-making occurs through interactions in the environment and with other individuals. Instructional models and learning assignments based on the social

constructivist perspective emphasize the importance of collaboration among peers and interactions with more skillful others (Shunk, 2000). Electronic journals composed by critical colleagues provide a means for dialogue, critical thinking and questioning, which all lead to the social construction of meaning.

Further, Vygotsky (1978) defined two developmental levels in the collaborative learning process, the level of actual development and the level of potential development. The level of actual development involves a state of learning that an individual has already reached and is considered the level at which the learner is capable of solving problems independently. Moreover, the level of potential development, or the zone of proximal development, is the level at which the learner is capable of reaching understanding with the guidance of a more capable being. At this level, pre-service teachers' cognitive structures and processing and their levels of actual development require guidance and support from those more experienced and knowledgeable in the field.

Reflective Thinking

The work of Dewey and Schön (1933, 1983) supports the use of electronic journal writing as a means to develop reflective thinking. Dewey's work purports that reflective thinking is a systematic and disciplined thought process. His work further defines reflective thinking as active, persistent and sequential logic influenced by one's prior experiences. Additionally, Dewey argued that education is "reconstruction or reorganization of experience." The electronic journal project aligns with theorists' views of reflective practice which seek to help pre-service and in-service teachers understand, question, investigate, and take seriously their own learning and practice (Brookfield, 1995).

While Dewey's work on reflective thinking primarily focused on aspects of prior experiences, Donald Schön introduced the dimension of time during which reflective thinking takes place. According to Schön, reflective thinking incorporates the capacity for teachers to reflect both "in action" and "on action". Specifically, reflection-in-action occurs while a teacher is involved in a particular educational activity, while reflection-on-action takes place after an educational activity and infers that the teacher will reflect about the experience at a later time (Greiman & Covington, 2007). The critical colleague pairings and the electronic journaling assignment used in this study

allowed practicing and future teachers an opportunity to engage in reflective thought within the context of their coursework ("in-action"). This also provided the participants a venue to make connections between theory and practice ("on-action") and come to deeper understandings about their current beliefs, as well as adopt new perspectives and ways of thinking. Schön, argues that meaningful reflective thought may be positively influenced by the development of mentoring relationships. In this study, in-service teachers who served as critical colleagues and mentors for the pre-service teachers asked appropriate questions and prompted analytical thinking to ensure that the reflection informed both their own instructional decisions, as well as the learning and insights of their pre-service teacher counterparts.

Collaborative Models of Teacher Preparation

Peer- to- peer discussions, shared readings and collaborative learning have emerged as important pedagogies in teacher education programs. Teacher education programs that endorse these pedagogies emphasize at least three essential conditions for learning about the profession. These conditions include reflection, sharing, and collaboration (Ikpeze, 2007). The electronic journaling project discussed in this paper provided increased opportunities for critical colleagues to reflect on prior knowledge, share classroom experiences, exchange ideas, and consider instructional implications for literacy teachers. Further, the project generated time for the participants to take charge of their learning and to collaboratively reflect on theory and practice. These collaborations resulted in the emergence of mentoring relationships between the in-service and pre-service teachers.

Mentoring is a nurturing process in which an experienced teacher, usually skilled in a specific area, serves as a role model to teach, encourage, counsel, and/or befriend a novice or less skilled teacher (Barnett, 1995). Within any given relationship, mentoring can serve any or all purposes of collaboration. Fishbaugh (1997) described four purposes of collaboration. Those purposes include supportive, facilitative, informative, and prescriptive collaboration. Supportive collaboration involves individuals caring for and helping one another, recognizing each other's work, and providing professional support to each other. Facilitative collaboration centers on helping peers to develop problem-solving skills. Similarly, informative collaboration involves individuals sharing information

and offering directive assistance to colleagues. Lastly, prescriptive collaboration provides a path of action for individuals to take.

The mentoring relationship between in-service teachers and pre-service teachers plays an influential role in the pre-service teacher's learning about the profession and induction to the field of education. During these relationships, in-service teachers' support of pre-service teachers is influenced by at least four mentoring factors, including personal attributes, involves displaying an enthusiasm for teaching, and in a mentoring relationship between in-service and pre-service teachers, it also involves inspiring pre-service teachers and helping them to develop confidence and positive attitudes about the profession. Effective mentoring also requires that in-service teachers possess sufficient content expertise in order to assist pre-service teachers in the reflective processes for developing teaching practices. Thirdly, evidence supports the need for mentors to exhibit pedagogical knowledge or demonstrate practical knowledge for implementing effective teaching strategies. Finally, the literature asserts that effective mentoring occurs when in-service teachers can readily provide feedback or constructive advice to pre-service teachers. The written responses composed by the critical colleagues during the electronic journaling exercise were analyzed to reveal these factors of mentoring and the types of collaboration that existed between the in-service and pre-service teachers as they dialogued about the foundations of literacy instruction.

Methodology

Participants

Two college faculty, one full-time professor and an adjunct lecturer, in a private, liberal arts teacher education program collaborated to develop a project to be conducted with in-service and pre-service teachers enrolled in graduate and undergraduate literacy courses during the fall 2009 semester. Thirteen in-service teachers and thirteen pre-service teachers participated in the study. The in-service teachers were graduate level students with an average of seven (7) years teaching experience in grades kindergarten through twelve. They were enrolled in the course, "Foundations of Reading and Language Arts." The thirteen pre-service teachers were primarily sophomore level status and were enrolled in the undergraduate course, "The Teaching of Phonics."

The Assignment

The two faculty established critical colleague pairings between the in-service and pre-service teachers enrolled in their literacy courses. For this study, the critical colleagues were required to read and react/respond to four (4) literacy articles posted on Blackboard throughout the term. Specifically, the articles related to emergent literacy, comprehension acquisition, guided writing instruction and high-stakes reading assessment. The articles were selected from two professional journals, *The Reading Teacher* and the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. The students were expected to dialogue with their assigned critical colleague via electronic journal. The dialogue had to include, at minimum, two (2) exchanges within two (2) weeks of the article postings. An exchange could consist of questioning the author or the critical colleague; seeking clarification from the colleague; making text-to-self connections; and summarizing key points and ideas.

Data Collection

The faculty read and evaluated the electronic journal entries submitted by the critical colleague pairings. These assessments, conducted at the conclusion of the semester, were based on criteria outlined on a scoring rubric established for the assignment. As indicated in Figure 1, the participants were asked to consider the following suggestions when crafting responses in the electronic journals. First, the reflections were to be supported by examples from the readings, experiences from professional practice and/or current or previous coursework. Additionally, they were asked to take advantage of the opportunity to think metacognitively and to demonstrate critical thinking, analysis and synthesis of information.

Further data analysis of the electronic journals was completed using a constant-comparative method. In addition to assessment of the individual responses written by the participants, attention was given to the types of written interactions or transactions that occurred between the critical colleagues. Therefore, the faculty individually coded each statement or question included in each of the journals based on the theoretical framework regarding mentoring relationships, described above. The faculty then compared the coding to reach consensus. The responses were categorized as either supportive collaboration, that included personal attributes and reflected an enthusiasm about the teaching profession;

informative collaboration, which focused on content expertise; facilitative collaboration, that incorporated pedagogical knowledge; or prescriptive collaboration, which offered feedback or constructive advice about literacy instruction.

Figure 1. Pre-service and In-service Teachers Journaling about the Foundation of Literacy Instruction.

Electronic Journal Rubric

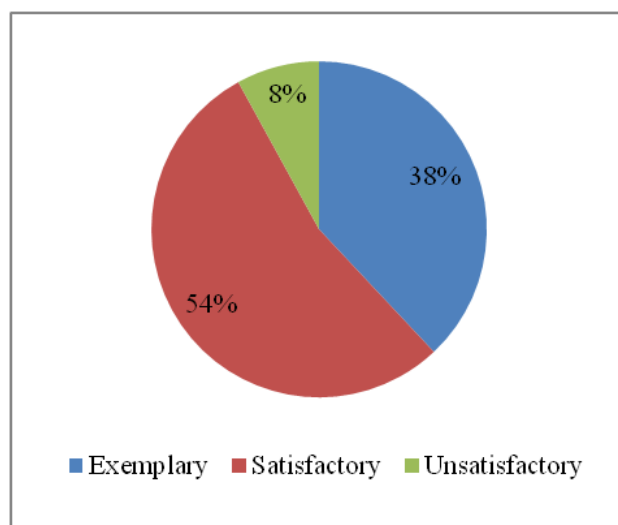
Criteria	Exemplary 5	Satisfactory 3	Unsatisfactory 1
Ideas/Content	<p>Entries demonstrate understanding of literacy content knowledge and application of content in professional practice using prior knowledge and other resources when applicable.</p> <p>Entries include critical thinking and synthesis.</p> <p>Entries show evidence of connections between course content and the article.</p>	<p>Entries demonstrate understanding of literacy content knowledge and application of content in professional practice using prior knowledge when applicable.</p> <p>Entries include critical thinking and synthesis.</p>	<p>Entries show very little evidence of understanding literacy content knowledge, or application of content in professional practice.</p>
Critical Thinking/Reflection	<p>Entries include detailed examples and references from the article.</p>	<p>Entries include examples and references from the article, but more detail is needed.</p>	<p>Entries do not provide relevant examples from the article.</p>
Mechanics/Conventions of Print	<p>All of the entries include correct spelling and grammar.</p>	<p>Most of the entries include correct spelling and grammar.</p>	<p>Few or none of the entries include correct spelling and grammar.</p>
Completion	<p>All entries are complete, clearly labeled and presented in order.</p>	<p>All entries are complete, but are not clearly labeled or presented in order.</p>	<p>All entries are not present, nor clearly labeled or presented in order.</p>

Results

Electronic Journal Rubric Findings

Five (5) or 38% of the journals at both the in-service and pre-service level ranked in the exemplary category on the scoring rubric. The entries showed clear evidence of connections between course content and the article readings. Seven (7) or 54% of the journals at both the in-service and pre-service level ranked in the satisfactory category on the scoring rubric. The entries demonstrated critical thinking and synthesis of information. Further, one (1) or 8% of the journals at both the in-service and pre-service level ranked in the unsatisfactory category on the scoring rubric. Those entries showed little evidence of application of content. The entries were primarily article summarizations. (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Assessment of Electronic Journal Entries



Coded Journal Data Findings

In-service teachers' responses were generally categorized as facilitative collaboration. Their entries demonstrated practical knowledge for implementing effective teaching strategies. The following direct quote from Julie, a kindergarten teacher, reflects her pedagogical knowledge:

"I especially liked the ideas of Vygotsky. I'm not sure what you may have learned about him yet, but I think his ideas are so helpful when I am teaching. When I read the section of the article on page 112 about how the teacher taught the students to use alphaboxes, I was reminded of Vygotsky. When the teacher provided modeling and temporary support, she was "scaffolding"

her students. This temporary support is one of my goals this year.”

The in-service, as well as the pre-service teachers’ responses were also categorized as informative collaboration. For example, the following direct quote from Grant, a middle childhood teacher education candidate, reflects literacy content expertise, and the connections gleaned from the current coursework and the article readings:

“Text –to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections were always something that was always good for not only me, but it was always a large part of what teachers taught to our classes. Making these connections, I think, really takes learning to the next level. It also puts the information and text we are reading in a more relatable format. For me, that was important because it allowed me to connect on a deeper level with what any author was trying to say.”

Pre-service teachers’ journal entries consistently showed evidence of the need for supportive collaboration. The sophomores revealed some anxiety and uncertainty about literacy instruction. This is evidenced in the following direct quote from Natalie, an early childhood teacher education candidate:

“I appreciate your sharing and openness with me, and I think that your ideas will help me once I get into the classroom. I think it’s great that you include a variety of genres when choosing the books for your classroom, and I think it’s very important for children to be able to go back and reread the books. I am also excited to hear that you make puppets so often to go along with the books that you read. We talked about this Readers Theatre a couple of weeks ago in class and got to try it out in groups using some stories that we were all familiar with. However, I still had doubts about using the strategy in an elementary classroom.”

Pre-service teachers’ responses also required prescriptive collaboration. Many entries consisted of text-to-self connections and questions to their critical colleagues about theory and practice. As a result, the in-service teachers frequently provided responses that included feedback or constructive advice. This is shown in the following direct quote from Brett, a seventh grade language arts teacher:

“Here’s my advice, teach the standards, not the test. Good scores will come with differentiated instruction that is derived from the state standards. If you teach in a third grade classroom, I am sure you will be teaching short answer and extended responses. There is hope for change! There will be a new “OAT” (Ohio Achievement Test) in the spring of 2013. It doesn’t mean things will be easier, but it will be something different.”

Discussion

Summary

An adjunct lecturer and a full time faculty member collaborated to conduct a study to examine the mentoring relationships that exist between in-service and pre-service teachers as they dialogue in response to professional articles about the foundations of literacy instruction. The faculty collaboration was based on the Teaching Circles initiative created by Michele Neaton at Century College in White Bear Lake, Minnesota (2008). Teaching Circles involve faculty members, including both full time and adjunct instructors, meeting throughout an academic term to discuss areas of interest in teaching and learning. The faculty involved integrate what they learn as part of a collaborative team into their teaching. This faculty to faculty collaboration provided opportunities for the individuals to reflect regularly upon a shared teaching experience, learn and immediately implement new and effective instructional and assessment techniques, and gain greater insight into their shared field of study, all within an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. An interesting outcome of the study revealed a relationship between the junior and senior faculty collaborators that mimics the underpinnings of social constructivism. The level of potential development was reached by both faculty members as they gained deeper understanding about pedagogy through their social interactions and from the exchange of information shared during the planning and implementation of the study.

In-Service Teachers

The primary findings of this study indicate the integral role that in-service teachers play in mentoring pre-service teachers in literacy content knowledge. A common feature in teacher education programs involves in-service teachers serving in the role of host or cooperating teacher in field and clinical settings. However, the need for mentoring and dialogue during

the coursework phase of teacher education programs is also vital. In this study, the in-service teachers consistently provided pedagogical knowledge and constructive feedback through facilitative and prescriptive collaboration as evidenced in their electronic journal entries. The written responses reflected thoughtful interpretation and advice to the pre-service teachers regarding the transfer of theory into actual classroom literacy practices. It was perceived from the journal entries that most of the in-service teachers experienced a sense of renewal as they were given the opportunity in this study to think and write aloud, share information, solve problems and consider novel approaches to literacy learning.

Pre-Service Teachers

The literature supports the notion that pre-service teachers may be filled with doubts about personal effectiveness, teaching competence, and whether one has the personal learning capacities to master the teaching profession (Lipton & Wellman, 2003). Mentoring, therefore, provided by an experienced, in-service teacher may offer support, create challenge, and facilitate a professional vision for the pre-service teacher. The findings in this study revealed that pre-service teachers were often managing the disequilibrium that new questions and newly acquired knowledge about literacy instruction produced. This was evidenced by the types of questions and quandaries noted in their electronic journal entries. In-service teachers frequently responded in a manner to inspire and to help develop the confidence of pre-service teachers through supportive collaboration. Further, through informative collaboration, provided by the experienced classroom teachers, pre-service teachers gained an increased understanding of literacy content knowledge.

Recommendations

The success of the faculty to faculty collaborations and student to student mentoring has encouraged the researchers to replicate this study in subsequent semesters. The need for pre-service teachers mentoring during the teacher education program is essential for the formation and understanding of sound literacy pedagogy at the undergraduate level.

The researchers have identified several areas which can enhance the dialogue between the participants in future studies. Instead of the random pairings of the critical colleagues that took place during this study, a more deliberate pairing can be established to take into consideration the grade level and teaching

fields of the participants. Also, in order to advocate student choice regarding the specific techniques and literacy practices available for discussion, a variety of articles will be posted which will expose in-service and pre-service teachers to additional literacy topics and provide a match with the critical colleagues' interests.

The course instructors would like to take a more active role in the electronic journaling assignment by engaging in the dialogue with a focus group of critical colleague pairings. Thereby, enabling the instructors to interact and respond throughout the semester to posted entries that can further expand the in-service and pre-service teachers' understanding and analysis of literacy content knowledge. Additionally, the researchers would like to increase the face-to-face opportunities for the in-service teachers and pre-service teachers to meet on a regular basis throughout the semester to participate in a "reading into the circle" activity (Calkins, 1994). This activity provides an opportunity in which the participants can share excerpts of their electronic journal entries or article quotes in a non-threatening atmosphere, in order to showcase the important ideas gleaned from the readings and their critical colleagues' responses, suggestions, and advice. The increased face-to-face connections can be more easily scheduled in the future, since both literacy courses taught by the instructors will be held on the same evening of the week.

Finally, the instructors will design and conduct a survey at the end of the study to gain insights and perceptions from the in-service and pre-service teachers' involvement in the electronic journaling assignment. This will enable the researchers to discern the viewpoints of the pre-service teachers regarding the collaborations that occurred throughout the study, as well as the in-service teachers' visions of themselves as literacy instructors.

Engaging in electronic journals can enable pre-service teachers to gain understanding from "a more capable other" who has had classroom experience and advanced coursework in literacy instruction at the graduate level. The electronic journaling can provide the in-service teachers with the opportunity to serve in a mentoring role, in order to expand upon the information discussed in the journal articles, while providing concrete classroom examples and support for future literacy teachers. During these relationships, in-service teachers support pre-service teachers in sharing, reflecting and refining their knowledge and skills

about teaching (Hodder & Carter, 1997).

The faculty to faculty collaborations enable the researchers to discuss current literacy practices, effective pedagogy and pertinent content knowledge collegially, as they continue to build the foundations of literacy instruction. All in all, collaborative partnerships may strengthen the faculty members' abilities to incorporate new strategies in their teaching. The researchers can experience a perceived appreciation for teamwork, and the opportunity allows for a heightened sense of dialogue, sharing and scholarly work. Most importantly, faculty to faculty collaborations have the potential to enhance professional relationships between colleagues and can rejuvenate a passion for teaching.

Lisa Henderson is a professor in the Division of Education at Baldwin-Wallace College and teaches literacy courses primarily at the graduate level. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree and a Master's Degree in Elementary Education at the University of Montevallo in Alabama. Her Ph.D. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham is in the area of Early Childhood Education and Development with an emphasis in Curriculum Supervision. She has nine years of teaching experience in elementary and middle grades and eighteen years of experience in higher education. In addition to her faculty responsibilities, she serves as the Director of Initial Licensure Programs. Her major research interests include teacher education, formative assessment, and leadership development.

Rochelle Berndt is a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction with a literacy concentration at Kent State University. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Bowling Green State University and a Master of Arts in Education degree, with a reading specialization, from Baldwin-Wallace College. Ms. Berndt is an adjunct lecturer, instructing teacher education and literacy courses for the Division of Education. She is also the Coordinator of Field/Clinical Placements in the Division of Education at Baldwin-Wallace College. Prior to her current positions, Ms. Berndt served as the Licensure Specialist in the Division of Education at Baldwin-Wallace College and was employed as a classroom teacher for twelve years, instructing intermediate level students in language arts and mathematics. Her lines of inquiry include equity pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching in middle childhood literacy classrooms, as

well as the teaching of social justice issues through the use of adolescent literature.

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Collaborating to Share Resources and Pedagogy: Interdisciplinary Intercollegiate Faculty Learning Circles

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Lisa Bauer, Ed.D.

Sue Griebeling, Ed.D.

Elizabeth Moore, Ed.D.

Collaboration is beneficial to both teachers and children in schools. Can this same benefit be found with higher education professionals in education departments that are teaching in-service and practicing teachers? In addressing this question, we must first define collaboration.

Collaboration has multiple meanings. The intent of the collaboration often defines the practice. Michael and Balraj (2003) define collaboration in higher education as faculty from multiple collegial institutions coming together to integrate their knowledge of curricular leadership and improve classroom practice. For the group described in this paper, this definition supports our efforts and accomplishments. For two years, we have come together as five professionals from multiple institutions and multiple disciplines with the intention to better our teaching and thus, serve our students more effectively.

Higher education professionals who collaborate within departments produce multiple benefits. Peer collaboration for faculty members with common academic interests is shown to be an effective way for faculty to develop teaching expertise (Quinlan & Akerlind, 2000). Typically meeting in groups of 6-15, faculty-learning communities provide safe spaces to explore teaching and learning (Cox, 2004). The learning community creates a supportive context for professional development where participants collaboratively share their unique experiences while engaging in active reflection (Hord, 2009). However, with all of the demonstrated benefits, the collaboration of higher education professionals is under studied and in need of further research (Quinlan & Akerlind, 2000). The

purpose of this paper is to share the experiences of participation in a faculty-learning circle with participants from different institutions and disciplines sharing resources and pedagogy in order to meet the needs of all learners. We address strengths, challenges, and lessons learned.

Participants

Five teacher educators, at various points in their careers, came together to collaborate as members of a faculty learning community. We came together as friends and alumni of the same Midwestern college doctoral program having all sought and received educational doctorates. We found that we all had similar questions developing out of our leadership roles. Initially emerging informally to support a colleague interviewing for a position, upon witnessing the benefits to all participants, the group evolved into a formal learning circle to collaborate around the needs of the individual members. This collaboration focused around teaching and research. While this is not a new concept, it is unique in that participants not only worked across disciplines, but also across institutions, in both rural and urban communities. Community membership provided a support network, opportunities to discuss concerns outside of our own institutions in a safe environment, and opportunities to share teaching strategies and resources. Working at three separate Midwestern institutions as well as in different departments allowed for opportunities to share diverse strengths and strategies as well as discuss similar teaching practices. Participants included a first year

tenure track faculty member in interdisciplinary early childhood education, a fifth year early childhood general education faculty member seeking tenure, a first year non-tenure track special education faculty member, a full-time administrative academic director of an early childhood online education program, and an adjunct faculty member in a gifted education program. All group members work with teachers in the classroom in various formats including supervising student teachers and practicum students, consulting, providing professional development, coaching, and parent education. In these interactions, group members encourage the concept of inclusive practice and collaboration among professionals within educational environments, thus making the idea of the partnerships within our own group essential to our personal practice.

Although our disciplines and areas of expertise differ, an overlap of goals exists in the preparation of all teacher candidates which supports collaboration. Early childhood teacher educators utilize the revised National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) developmentally appropriate practices with their students, which indicate that inclusive practices are the rule rather than an afterthought. Interdisciplinary early childhood education integrates special education throughout all of the coursework, teaching the recommended practices from the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC). The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has merged with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in an effort to address the diverse needs of students identified as gifted. The CEC advises that collaboration between special educators and general educators is crucial to the success of inclusive education (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). We follow a model that demonstrates seamless, compatible collaboration between regular and special education teacher educators which holds some lessons about integrating diversity and inclusivity throughout all coursework.

While CEC, DEC, and NAEYC advocate for many types of collaboration between special and general educators, our pedagogy group embodies collaboration. We not only model co-teaching between professionals (special education and general education professors teaching classes collaboratively) for teacher education students but we also collaborate as professionals to establish the best educational opportunities for our students, both special and general educators.

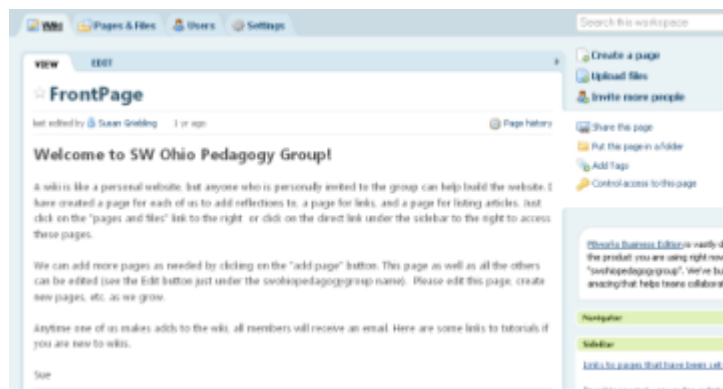
Our collaboration and the examination of it included meetings, reflections, and analysis of reflections.

Method

Participation involved monthly meetings, journal writing, attendance at teaching conferences, and sharing resources on a wiki. Finding time in five professionals' schedules was not always easy; however, there was a commitment and motivation to meet. Each gathering focused around a specific topic. For example, several meetings were devoted to discussing methods of implementing active learning in college classrooms. Meetings lasted approximately two hours and locations changed to accommodate work schedules and traveling distance. At each meeting one member was designated to take notes. These notes were later uploaded to the group wiki site.

A wiki is a free, online webpage application with which WebPages can be established, housed, and maintained. This group's wiki was implemented early on as a way to share documents, resources, notes, and reflections. The wiki (Figure 1) became invaluable for planning, organizing, collaborating, and writing. Although most members were not familiar with using a wiki for these purposes, all committed to learning how to use this tool and took responsibility for keeping the wiki organized and updated.

Figure 1. Wiki used for collaboration



Between meetings the group members were responsible for further investigation of the focused topic, either through reading or research. For example, for several months we read and discussed the book *Every Day Anti Racism* (Pollock, 2008). The book was chosen as a response to the needs we found of our students in the classrooms in which we practiced for creating culturally responsive practice in the K-12 environment.

Two participants utilized the book with teacher education students. Others thought the book might be

of use in the future if teaching classes about diversity; however found that issues of culturally responsive practice applied regardless of the course topic. Discussions and journal reflections encouraged us to attempt to implement in an authentic manner at least one theme or idea. Using strategies with our group similar to ones utilized with students, we constantly inquired to each other, “What did you learn and what will you do with what you learned?” In addition, the group members who used the book in their own classrooms included the reflections from the pedagogy group as a jumping off point for classroom discussions.

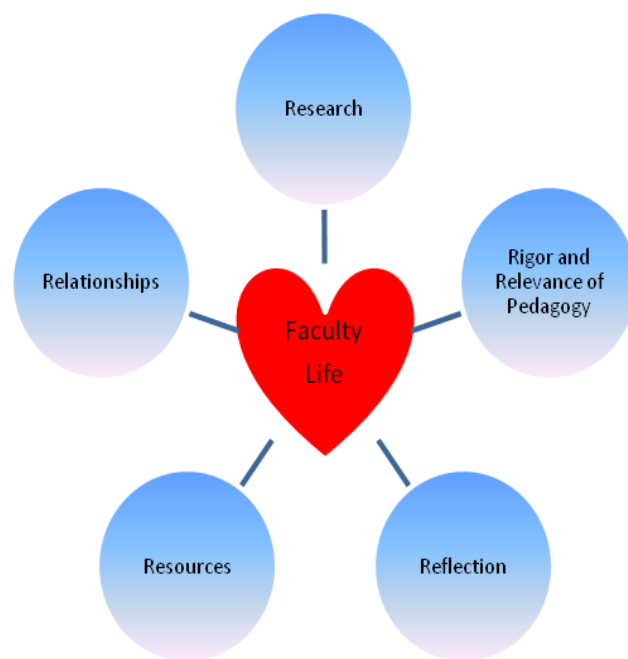
Each month a particular section of *Every Day Anti Racism* (Pollock, 2008) was assigned to read and this section was discussed at the next meeting. In addition to reading and researching, each member kept two reflection journals. One journal included reflections on the readings. The other journal contained reflections around the process of meeting and participating in the pedagogy group – what we learned from that month’s meeting, how the group supported us, and how specific discussions influenced our thinking. Each person was given an individual page on the wiki and reflections were posted there. The members’ reflections were collected from the wiki and analyzed for content. Inductive analysis was conducted by reading through the data as a whole followed by microanalysis or line by line coding of each word and phrase (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). An examination of various possibilities of the significance of each phrase meant continuously returning to the data to make comparisons and check for accuracy. Conceptual labels were developed by examining the language and the context. We grouped related categories and determined semantic relationships (Hatch, 2002).

As we examined our group process we sought to explore the following research question: What are the elements of a dynamic pedagogy group?

Results

The learning circle provided support in various areas in different ways. Themes emerged that proved to be essential elements for understanding our group examination. These elements include research, relationships, rigor and relevance of pedagogy, resources, and reflection. The collaborative model maintains the heart of faculty life and success as faculty members. Figure two illustrates these salient elements.

Figure 2. Collaborative Model



Research

As faculty members, there is an expectation of some productivity in the area of research. For those of us searching for employment, publication may make us look desirable. For those of us in tenure track positions, some research and publication is necessary in order to keep our jobs. In addition to conducting research together, members of the group were willing to review individual research, answer questions, and provide suggestions of possible outlets for publication.

ASHE (2009) reported that cross disciplinary collaborations allow more publication opportunities for faculty engaging in the tenure process in higher education institutions. Also indicated are more revenue enhancing opportunities for higher education institutions, such as grant opportunities, culminating from diverse collaborations.

Relationships

Social support and identity development as higher education professionals were themes addressed in our pedagogy group reflections. Meeting the demands of a new job and profession were real challenges for over half of the group members. To add to this, one of our participants was in the final year of a doctoral program and writing a dissertation as well as teaching in higher education. Another was being reviewed for tenure at her institution. One of our participants commented, “You know, I remember my first year in the classroom and the demands placed upon me. I was crazed and busier than I ever thought possible. With this job

in higher education, the people that I teach are a little bigger, but the demands of the job are very similar [regarding intensity of time and teaching demands] and at times, I feel very overwhelmed.” The group members who were not new to teaching in higher education provided much mentoring and advice.

The group created an outlet and a safe space outside of our own institutions. The social support and collegiality served as motivation and rejuvenation. Social support and collegiality is an important component in faculty success (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2005). The support provided through our relationships allowed us to develop as faculty.

Identity development is crucial to the growth of faculty in higher education. Collaborative groups assist in developing identity in that, groups allow forums in which members talk about subjects that provide clarification of new identities associated with the academic demands placed upon them in higher education (Cuthbert, Spark, & Burke, 2009). Social support serves to define what appears to be vague about the academy. regarding issues such as tenure by allowing questions to be asked and answered (Greene, O’Connor, Good, Ledford, Peel, & Zhang, 2008).

Resources and Reflection

Shared resources became a theme of import in our group. The definition of resources implies sharing of materials; however, we found it hard to separate sharing physical resources from sharing our expertise. Hand in hand, sharing resources and sharing a professional dialogue supported rich teaching practices and learning communities (Cox, 2004).

Utilization of a wiki allowed for sharing of resources such as websites, educational videos, texts, and active learning strategies. Sharing information obtained from our separate institutions and colleagues with our intercollegiate group was particularly useful. Each institution has its own culture and we were able to combine the resources from the three institutions and five departments.

Part of our supportive context and active reflection included our engagement in dialogue. Buysse, Sparkman, & Wesley (2003) defined communities of practice actively participating in dialogue as a group of professionals with shared expertise focused on a particular topic, (in this case higher education classroom methods) shared across disciplines. Through our diverse expertise (special education, literacy, early childhood, gifted education, and TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language), we learned by engag-

ing in dialogue.

Dialogue among colleagues allows the expansion of ideas. Through dialogue, professionals garner ideas that they would not have had alone (Game & Metcalfe, 2009). Thus, students in classrooms conducted by teachers who are participants in collaborative dialogue with other professionals receive a broader, more developed content that assists in student growth. Debate and explication of divergent opinions of those engaged in collaboration across disciplines allows for obtaining a fuller understanding of both pedagogy and content (Bousquet, 2008). Game and Metcalfe (2009) explained, “the good teacher knows that they are forever learning and that they need continuous support from others if they are to meet the world as it really is’ (p. 49). We found that the exercise of clarifying our professional positions regarding our practices to the group and reflecting on how the feedback was received modified our original stances and helped us reshape and hone what we did in the classroom.

As teacher educators, we work to help our students reflect on their practice and make changes. Practicing what we preach, faculty ought to reflect on best practices to continuously improve our teaching. Reflecting in journals, which we shared and posted on the wiki as well as reflecting during our meetings, provided opportunities to improve practice. Engaging in book study, we read and discussed a book dealing with issues of race and diversity, considering how it might influence our teaching. Professionals who reflect on their own teaching practice engage in improving the quality of teaching in that they define what constitutes effective practice; thus, more effective ways of teaching students are developed and executed in the higher education classroom (Fitzmaurice, 2008; Stein, Isaacs, & Andrews, 2004; Yoon, Ho, & Hedberg, 2005).

Rigor and Relevance of Pedagogy

We improved our pedagogy by focusing on rigor and relevance. Participants struggled not with what or how to teach, but how to keep learning relevant as well as continue to challenge both students and ourselves. We discussed and shared active learning strategies as well as ways to make learning engaging and meaningful to students. Higher education collaborations improve the content that is offered to students and make the content more useable in the real world (Briggs, 2007). Further, a sense of responsibility for all students at the higher education level improves teacher accountability (Briggs, 2007).

Exemplary faculty look toward how the instruction provided for students can further the educational process toward the end goal rather than just mastery of the content matter provided in one class (Bain, 2004). The focus becomes student centered. Brown (2008) noted student centered learning occurs when “the planning, teaching, and assessment revolve around the needs and abilities of the students” (p. 30). This process of being responsive to student needs reflects best practice for faculty. Best practice is exemplified in the demonstration of reflective thinking, open communication, and ability to think about and perfect the teaching unit before instruction occurs (McKenna, Bugrahan, & Light, 2009).

One of the goals our group quickly adopted in its first year after members participated in a college teaching conference was to make our lessons more student centered. During this process we shared syllabi, class assignments, grading rubrics, and daily classroom structure in each of our higher education classrooms. Becoming more student centered for us meant that we moved from the lecture model toward active student engagement. In our own classrooms we became more inclusive by honoring a plurality of views and practice that allowed more student input (Bernacchio, Ross, Washburn, Whitney, & Wood, 2007). We were also afforded a unique opportunity to reflect on our practice and decide how to best impact our students educationally (Bernacchio et al., 2007).

Discussion

Throughout the first six months of meeting, we sought to establish the most productive agenda for taking advantage of the time we had together. We decided to meet for an hour at our face-to-face monthly meetings. We divided this time into slots that included social support, discussion of pertinent book topics, examination of classroom topics and questions, and exploration of what we wanted to accomplish for future meetings. Once we developed this schedule for meetings, a larger landscape of a community of learners emerged. As we entered into the faculty learning community, we established the following goals based upon analysis of our journal entries and meeting notes documenting discussions, needs, successes, and challenges:

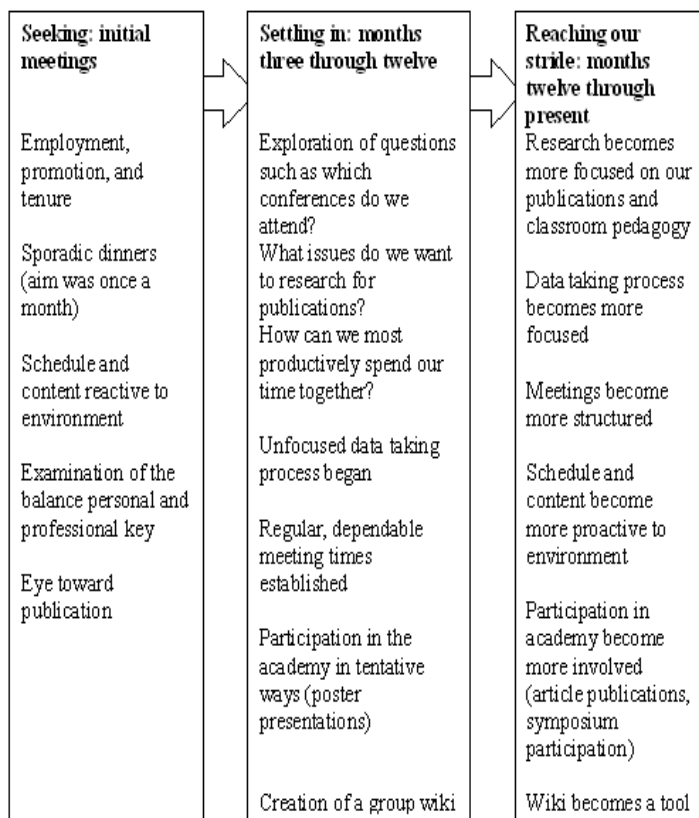
1. Collaboration will tap into the expertise of each of our areas of academic discipline to strengthen our own teaching and impart more inclusive ideas to the students we work with.
2. Collaboration will assist in sharing

the experiences, processes, strategies, and lessons learned from participation in a collaborative learning circle.

3. Collaborative groups will add to the body of import understudied in higher education, namely collaboration in higher education.

We started with these linear goals. We found however, that it was an organic process in that through addressing the interests of our practice, we grew one set of ideas that ran their course, and then the foundations of this process germinated new essential questions. We would assert that the dynamic nature of this process infused vitality into our teaching. Figure 3 demonstrates the developmental nature of our group meetings. When thought of in terms of purely structuring a pedagogy group, we had some successes and challenges related to the concept. The group transitioned over time from a vehicle of support and survival to a cohesive strength based team. Over time we began to recognize and utilize our differing individual strengths to benefit us as a group.

Figure 3. Flowchart of the dynamic nature of the issues and questions examined by the group over time.



Successes

One way to maximize the benefits of the group was to structure each meeting to allow for addressing the

fundamental elements. For example, there was time at the beginning of each meeting for relationship building or social support. Each meeting was focused to address a specific topic. Exploring a book regarding pedagogy allowed for focused discussion about the rigor and relevance of pedagogy. Utilization of the wiki allowed for collaborative research and reflection as well as a consistent storage space for resources. In spite of the many benefits, the group did face some challenges.

Challenges

Time was a consistent challenge. With full time jobs and families, it was often difficult to schedule meetings. One way in which we addressed the challenge of time management was to utilize the wiki and email communication. We also eventually set a fixed meeting date on the first Tuesday of every month at the same location to avoid scheduling issues. Another possible solution for the future is the use of Skype or other conferencing tools to enable the members unable to attend face to face meetings to participate.

Maintaining balance was a problematic issue for all participants. With such a strong pull from the classroom to maintain high teaching standards, and similar pull from personal lives full of family, children, and the demands that accompany living, we found ourselves in a constant struggle to balance time for both our jobs and our lives.

Implications and Future Directions

Faculty members can expand their support circles by extending learning circles outside of current institutions. In an effort to meet expectations and maintain balance, extending one's support network may allow for enhanced personal and professional growth.

Resources increase when participants work across institutions. We are able to share guidance and support received from mentors, department chairs, and deans across institutions multiplying the information provided. When conducting research, the ability to have partners searching in varying libraries enhances the likelihood of finding a broad range of literature. Partnerships between schools and higher education institutions could include an interdisciplinary inter-institution learning circle at the high school, middle school, or elementary school level.

While no data was taken from students to measure their benefit from their instructors' participation in the pedagogy group, certain benefits could be inferred. For example, if members found that the rigor

and relevance of pedagogy was improved as a result of their work, surely their students must have derived benefits from their instructor's interdisciplinary collaborations. A future direction for study in this area would include devising ways to measure student satisfaction and learning in the classroom as a result of the pedagogy implemented that was devised in the instructor's pedagogy group.

Our next steps in the process as we embrace our future directions will be to continue to meet and grow as a group. This will enhance our ability to work together as colleagues while also enhancing the ideas and experience that are iterative in nature to the process of conducting our group. The balance of support and accountability has increased our productivity and reflective teaching practices. We will focus our efforts on participating in the academy, perfecting our own classroom pedagogy for our higher education students, and collaborating to take advantage of all of our expertise. For us, the pedagogy group has been a formula that is well worth the time and effort.

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Growing Social Responsibility Through Service Learning and Challenge Days

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Kimberly Bash

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Social Responsibility

With the challenges facing our students today the Findlay, Ohio, community works together to meet these needs along with the University of Findlay. Through a robust Service Learning Program, Emerging Community Leaders Investing in Philanthropic Service (ECLIPSe) and Challenge Day our students are enmeshed in the democratic process and social responsibility. Students take charge of real world learning and build toward changing their community in terms of appreciation of diversity, serving while learning, and engendering philanthropy.

Service Learning

Service learning is not volunteerism or community service, it is much more. Following the work of Richard Bradley (2001), service learning is a way to reach students through active participation in a community need that is organized and built into the curriculum. When service learning projects meet community needs it goes beyond raising money for a cause, it allows students to see their actions making a difference (Sloan, 2008). Service learning does not stop there, it is also involves reflection and analysis of demonstrated results. Research shows that service learning can help increase students' self-confidence, leadership skills and sense of empowerment and also develops civic responsibility.

Bradley (2001) has conducted research in K-12 school-based service learning projects and concluded that they: have a positive effect on personal development, decrease "at-risk" behavior, increase the ability to work with diverse groups, increase social responsibility, increase knowledge of con-

tent, increase motivation, increase student attendance, build respect, improves school climate, and has a positive impact on the perception of the community regarding youth. Additionally, research shows that service learning can help increase students' self-confidence, leadership skills and sense of empowerment and also develops civic responsibility. Service learning encourages students to treat each other kindly and help each other and care about their work and touches the future as youth engaged in service learning become adults they will already be individuals who will care about their community, who will be knowledgeable about their community, and who will have a stronger work ethic and who are grounded in the need for social responsibility.

Preservation, Archaeology and Serving Together

One service-learning project is the Preservation, Archaeology and Serving Together (PAST) formerly known as the Save Johnson's Island Project. PAST is an extra-curricular organization that annually involves all the ninth graders at Findlay High School and teacher candidates from the University of Findlay. Johnson's Island was a Civil War Prison where Prisoners of War were held between 1862 and 1865 and is located in Sandusky Bay. This project can help students understand the significance of the Civil War as it impacted Ohio. Archeological digs on the site yield 300 to 400 artifacts per day. The site was declared a historic landmark in 1990 and the Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island have raised funds to purchase 17 acres or land that was not designated as a historic landmark but did include part of the prison com-

pound (Depot of Prisoners of War on Johnson's Island, Ohio, 2008). The Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island are working in conjunction with Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio, to conduct archeological digs with plans to someday fully restore the site. Students from Findlay High School are raising money each year to help with the effort to pay the mortgage on the land and help with future digs. Students are involved in archeological digs at the site, restoring the site, and educating their peers and community about the need to Save Johnson's Island. FHS and Heidelberg students simulate an archeological dig in the ninth grade social studies classrooms. Additionally, videos, artifacts and discussions teach the ninth graders the role of Johnson's Island during the Civil War. These classroom experiences annually cause additional students to pick up the torch in a sustainable cycle of promoting citizenship and active participation in the democratic process.

This service learning project impact is best described by advisor, Mr. Gene Damon, "Our experience with involving high school students in historic preservation and archaeology is that many of our students are not the traditionally gifted and over committed students that one sees engaged in civic involvement. Many of our students come from tougher, more working class backgrounds and involvement in our group helps them become more committed to school in general. Their grades and attendance tend to improve and their teachers and parents note the improvement." Student Nate Rackley adds, "I found that the meetings were held with a great sense of parliamentary procedure, questions were asked and committees for certain activities formed. As both me and my father are big into American history, and I especially in the Civil War of our country, I felt honored and a sense of duty to help preserve one of the few actual historic sites in Ohio."

Philanthropy

The State of Ohio brought together a team from the Ohio Grantmakers Forum, Ohio Community Service Council, Campus Compact and the Ohio Department of Education to fund ten partnerships in the state to develop grant-making councils run by local youth to support youth service learning projects. This impetus led to the development of the Findlay/Hancock County youth grantmakers forum Emerging Community Leaders Investing in Philanthropic Service (ECLIPSe). The goal of the ECLIPSe Partnership is to promote youth philanthropy and service learning

leading to greater youth civic engagement. Partners include eight K-12 school districts, University of Findlay and several non-profit organizations. Findlay City Schools working in partnership with community organizations and business has aggressively worked toward building ethics and social responsibility to prepare students and teacher candidates to be positive role models and community leaders.

ECLIPSe includes a youth grant making council made up of eighth grade through college level students from throughout Findlay/Hancock County who raise and grant funds for local service learning projects. ECLIPSe students embrace a philanthropic lifestyle that will impact generations to come. Those that request a grant must present before the youth grant makers why their project is important and the impact the project will have on the community. In Findlay/Hancock County, ECLIPSe youth and adult partners have helped more than 263 teachers, 3,505 students and 408 adult volunteers implement service-learning projects over the past six years. Forty-eight grants totaling \$43,047.08 have been awarded since 2002 in Hancock County. Projects are required to have reflective activities which allow students to get an opportunity to discuss, act, create or write about what they accomplished and the impact that work had on the community.

Youth grantmakers have worked hard on fundraisers such as a Quarter Campaign and Million Penny Campaign in K-12 schools and local businesses, Dance Marathon, Legacy Campaign and the Zach Morgan Memorial Soccer Tournament to raise the dollars to support grant requests. ECLIPSe youth encourage their peers to give their time, talent and treasure for the sake of others. They work with peers and adults to address a wide range of community issues. As one ECLIPSe youth grantmakers says, "It is everyone's responsibility to be engaged and serve". It is important to ECLIPSe that all youth at every grade level get this opportunity. Service learning and philanthropy are not just for your typical youth leaders. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve."

Some of the projects funded for Findlay City Schools through ECLIPSe include:

- smARTWORKS helps youth develop art skills and neighborhood art festivals.
- Rapid Readers provides books for Findlay High School students to mentor elementary students who are reading above their grade level.

- FHS Environmental Club funding to clean up the Blanchard River. Central Middle School was also funded to support a student-led recycling service-learning project.
- Middle schools were supported to build outdoor spaces and nature trails.
- FHS Junior Statesman of America (JSA) were supported to educate peers and raise funds for bed nets, school supplies, water wells, a secondary school and farm implements for Tanzania. JSA's motto is "democracy is not a spectator sport".
- Elementary students were supported on a Veteran's Day project.
- Middle school students were supported to develop self-esteem and positive decision-making skills for girls.

"Serving others is not just a form of do-goodism or feel-goodism, it is a road to social responsibility and citizenship. When linked closely to classroom learning... it is an ideal setting for bridging the gap between the classroom and the street, between the theory of democracy and its much more obstreperous practice.... Service is an instrument of civic pedagogy.... In serving the community, the young forge commonality; in acknowledging difference, they bridge division; and in assuming individual responsibility, they nurture social citizenship" (Barber, 1998, p.232).

Challenge Day

Challenge Day has become part of the Findlay High School health curriculum and all sophomores participate in Challenge Day. Challenge Day was developed in 1987 in Martinez California by Yvonne and Rich St. John-Dutra and Challenge Day has taken place in 450 cities, 39 U.S. states, and five provinces of Canada, Japan, Germany, and Australia.

The following are three scenarios from Challenge Day activities. Students are asked; if you have ever been discriminated against because of your color or ethnic group, step across the line – Asians, African Americans, Jewish and white students cross the line. If you have ever been discriminated against because of your gender step across the line – males and females cross the line. If your life has ever been complicated by a divorce, step across the line – about 100 of the 125 people in the gym cross the line. In all the scenarios presented throughout the day, most of the people in the gym cross the line. Challenge Day is a day long activity where students, teachers, administrators and community members explore their inner selves and discover that each individual is more like the others

present than he/she is different. Challenge Day teaches the participants that we normally only show the world the tip of our personal iceberg – the persona that we want the world to think we are while we hide the 90% of the iceberg, who we really are. Each person learns that the others have experienced pain, discrimination, have felt detachment from school/job and often had feelings of low self-esteem and inadequacies. Through this common experience of Challenge Day forcing everyone to dig deeper and show who we really are under the tip of the iceberg those present in the gym begin to view each other and themselves totally differently – there is more acceptance, more compassion, new leaders emerge, there is a shift in negative peer pressure to positive support and a true and lasting common bond is formed. Participants leave Challenge Day more willing to tell their parents they love them, apologize to siblings and classmates and to say, "I'm sorry." Challenge Day serves the dual purpose of providing diversity training for local business employees and for FHS students. Jasmine Smith, a senior at FHS stated, "There was a lot of racial discrimination my freshman year... some of my friends moved because of this... it got worse my sophomore year.... It really opened my eyes to see things in a different light (because of Challenge Day)... We feel more comfortable walking down the hallways... There is less fighting and people are more tolerable with other people's personalities." Maggie Yoder, another senior at FHS added, "It's about releasing that balloon of pressure that builds up inside of you... really being able to be who you are without fear." And Marathon employee, Donna Henry stated, "Marathon has an on-going commitment to support inclusion and diversity in our community... It is important for Marathon as a leader in Hancock County to support efforts and organizations that mirror our values."

A post-Challenge day survey of 316 students showed:

- 99.37 % I will try to be more respectful of others as a result of what I learned today.
- 95.% I believe my actions affect my school and my community.
- 98.1% I can be a positive helper to at least one person everyday at Findlay High School.
- 98.4 % I have learned that I am not the only one who has challenges in my life.

Closing Thoughts and Future Plans

One student drops out of school every 26 seconds – in the time it took you to read this article four students have dropped out of high school. But a concerted effort to teach social responsibility through programs such as service learning, ECLIPSe, and Challenge Day type of activities can be that motivating factor that makes a difference. The difference between a student feeling connected and staying the course of high school to become a graduate or becoming another drop out statistic. Research shows that engagement of students in such programs does help students feel connected, engaged and motivated which leads to improved academic performance and behavior. Findlay City Schools plan to expand service learning into other disciplines, recruit student leaders for the ECLIPSe board, and support current service learning projects. In order to provide additional support for freshmen students a new mentoring program is being developed for seniors to act as mentors to help freshmen students be engaged, develop character, and to become involved in the democratic process.

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Kimberly Bash is the Youth and Education Program Officer at The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation. She has 17 years of experience working in education administration and nonprofit management.

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The Preservice Teacher's Web 2.0 Tool Kit

Sarah McCorkle, M.Ed.

Today the Internet hosts an abundance of technology services that were once limited to costly software packages that offered no collaboration and very little interactivity. The emergence of Web2.0, a play on software version numbers indicating revisions and improvements, now allows those with limited technical ability to combine videos, photos, and audio in ways that were unimaginable a decade ago. And even with what appears to be limitless possibilities in digital expression and information sharing, the most exciting news is in the price tag: nearly all of these sites and services are free or relatively inexpensive.

Free and inexpensive lends itself easily to the needs of P-12 teachers in this era of budget cuts and stretched dollars. Rather than investing in costly software that must be maintained and updated, Web 2.0 runs within the web browser. There is no better time than now to provide preservice teachers with a tool kit of Web2.0 technologies and to demonstrate their appropriate use before these teachers enter the field. Through appropriate modeling within college and university coursework, the seed of instructional technology will be planted and ready to thrive long before preservice teachers reach their own classrooms (Hargrave & Hsus, 2000).

The current generation of students grew up with technologies that have left most teachers and teacher educators intimidated, confused, or simply uninterested (Prensky, 2006). Research has suggested that many new teachers entering the field are not well prepared to teach effectively with technology or are unaware of new technologies that might prove useful in their classrooms (Angeli, 2004).

The reality is that children spend much of their free time creating and expressing themselves through technologies that can and should be used in the classroom (Prensky, 2006). This article will shed some light on VoiceThread, Wix, PB Works, and TimeToast, the Web2.0 tools that all teachers should learn to use effectively.

VoiceThread

This website allows the user to upload nearly any file (PowerPoint, digital video, photo, Word document, spreadsheet, etc.) and record an audio commentary. Audio is recorded directly in the web browser, and there is no need to convert or upload the audio file. Other users can then visit the VoiceThread and use their microphones or webcams to discuss the topic at hand. VoiceThread takes a typical presentation, voiceover, or discussion to an entirely new level.

Teachers or students can make a VoiceThread and the process is very easy; instructions for each of the three steps are provided on screen: upload, record, and share. Teachers can create a short story within a set of PowerPoint slides and allow children to practice reading into a microphone or to answer a series of comprehension questions. Students are motivated to use VoiceThread, as they often enjoy using microphones and recording equipment (Dlott, 2007). Using VoiceThread in this manner mimics the features of more expensive products, such as Scholastic's Read 180. However, the teacher would be required to go back and re-view the recording, as voice recognition is not integrated within the VoiceThread service.

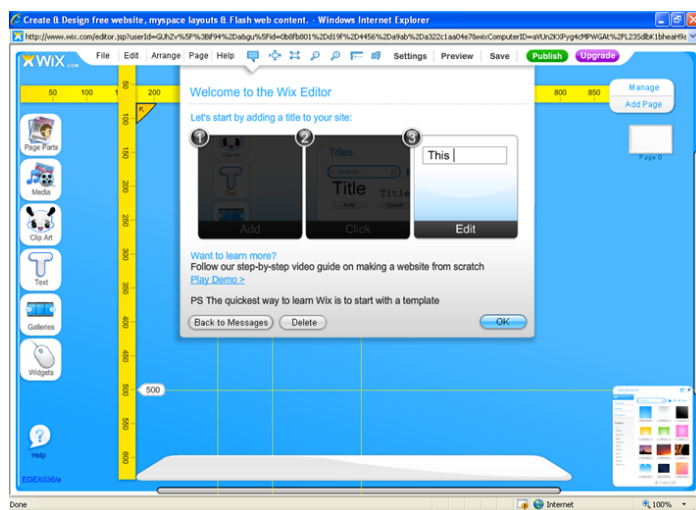
Students can write and narrate their own original stories using VoiceThread, or develop an ongo-

ing story with other students in small groups. Students learning English as a second language can practice their conversation skills based on prompts provided from other students within the VoiceThread in an asynchronous manner. And it is worth noting that voiceovers can be added to a slideshow within VoiceThread much more easily than in PowerPoint. VoiceThread can be found at VoiceThread.com. Basic accounts are free; however, a useful management console can be purchased for a reasonable fee that makes managing students' accounts and passwords very easy and provides privacy tools through class rosters.

Wix

Flash is a powerful software program that allows users to develop websites, animations, and many other diverse applications. The software can be costly and the learning curve steep, which doesn't make Flash a great choice for the classroom. Wix, however, is a Flash-based application with an intuitive interface that allows the user to develop simple Flash websites within a web browser. Many templates are provided, eliminating the need to learn a programming language.

With no software to install, Wix allows the user to create digital posters and digital books that flip their pages on screen. Students can use these digital books to tell a story through multimedia or the poster feature to reflect upon and display what they have learned (Shank, 2007).



Moreover, Wix allows the user to simply drag-and-drop videos, photos, and animations into the project stage. YouTube videos, photos, and fun animated characters motivate students to develop presentations that would make PowerPoint seem dated.

This site is available at Wix.com and is completely free. A premium version is available for those who would like to remove advertisements. Privacy controls allow the user to password protect their project or block it from search engines.

PB Works

A very useful wiki is available through this site and educator tools include the ability to manage students' usernames and passwords. This collaborative writing area allows a small group of privileged users to edit, revise, delete, or add to a body of text. Changes are tracked by user name with a date and time stamp, and older versions can be restored if necessary.

Not only is PB Works good for facilitating multiple authors working on a paper or report, but it can be used for collecting facts and information. Wikis are excellent for gathering collections of things, such as useful websites with student-written reviews. Terms and definitions can also be collected and revised by students in the classroom. Lab results can be recorded, modified, and edited as new concepts are learned.



Some educators may disagree with the concept of wikis, because any student can read, write, and erase. But when used properly and monitored closely, a wiki can be a powerful information sharing and collaborative tool. Wikis should be used to present facts rather than opinions, as opinions will differ and lead to conflicts among students battling over the edit button. Facts and information will likely minimize the need for deleting, focusing instead on editing and refining the information.

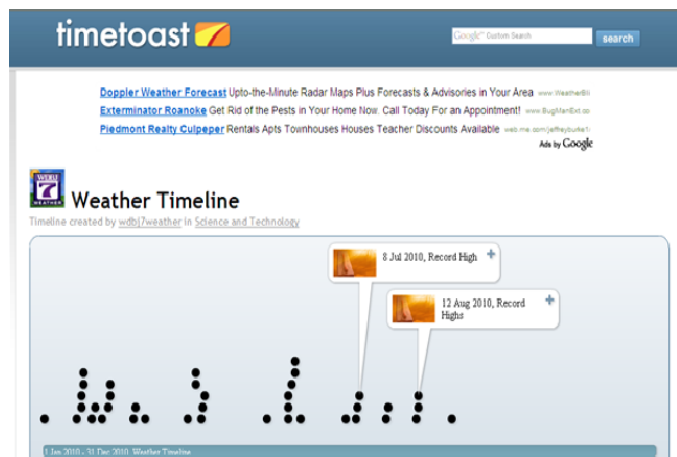
The ability to add new information at any time, build upon prior information, and constantly revise and perfect the information, allows everyone in the group to participate, rather than enabling just one or two members to dominate the process (Clyde & Deloher, 2005). Providing students, especially young stu-

dents, with a clear set of goals and guidelines at the beginning of the project will eliminate grading and organization headaches, as will keeping a close eye on the wiki to clean up formatting issues and guide students in the right direction when needed.

PB Works has various account levels but, for a single classroom, the free version contains generous features. Classroom and Campus editions are available for a reasonable fee, providing additional storage and management solutions. The free, Basic Education version of PB Works allows teachers to create accounts and passwords for students after creating the wiki site. They only have to go to the *Users* tab and click on *Add More Users*. On the following screen a prompt appears to create accounts for your students.

TimeToast

Timelines are a great way for students to organize and display information, and there are several free services that allow students to create timelines within their web browser. TimeToast does this best by providing a clean, easy-to-navigate interface suitable for both student projects and teacher-created supplements to a classroom lecture. Photos for each point in the timeline can be uploaded, descriptions written, and links to websites or YouTube videos added to create a very immersive experience.



Multimedia timelines are not only perfect for history projects, but also for student biographies. Teachers can use the multimedia timeline to guide their lectures and to motivate and engage students (Briggs, 2007). As the user's mouse pointer rolls across the timeline, animated bubbles appear on screen with a preview of an uploaded photo representing that point in time. The user simply clicks to expand and any notes, descriptions, or links to external websites appear for further exploration.

This timeline creation site can be found at TimeToast.com and is entirely free. Timelines can be made private or public, and students will need an email address to create an account. An embed code is automatically generated to allow seamless integration into a course management system or class website.

Conclusion

This is but a small sample of the free and inexpensive sites and services available online. Many Web 2.0 sites are first created for personal collaboration or communication purposes and then are revised to add additional tools and features specifically for educators as the user-base of these sites continues to grow. A quick search for Web 2.0 tools will return many useful results, and fresh companies are starting new sites daily. Encouraging college and university faculty to remain current and aware of new tools is vital to improving the preservice teacher's Web 2.0 toolkit.

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Book Review: *The Beautiful Tree* by James Tooley; Washington, D.C.: The Cato Institute, 2007.

Terry Miller, Ed. D.

The earthquake that devastated Haiti in January, 2010, had the effect of focusing the world's attention once again on the plight of the poor in developing countries in a way that both amazed and perplexed those of us who continue to be concerned about these issues. Amazed at the outpouring of support from governments, charitable organizations, and individuals; perplexed by how little difference all of this aid –hundreds of billions of dollars – has had on this tiny island nation. Haiti has been and remains the poorest country in the western hemisphere, unable to feed itself or to provide even basic services to its more than eight million citizens.

As in much of the third world, literacy and basic educational levels in Haiti remain low, and it is generally accepted by international development workers that providing universal education to the children there would be one very important part of the solution to the problem of poverty. James Tooley, a former professor of education in Britain and now an educational consultant who works with administrators and teachers in private schools in India, might agree with this premise but disputes the abilities of governments in these developing countries to accomplish this important task. This might not be a surprise coming from a book published by the Cato Institute, a proponent of small government and minimal state regulation. Nevertheless, Tooley set about to discover the extent to which private schools are already providing education to elementary and secondary students in places where one would least expect it – the city slums and rural villages of third world and devel-

oping countries in Africa and Asia, including Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, India and even China.

Tooley's research was prompted in part by his almost accidental discovery of a large number of small private schools in the slums of the Old City of Hyderabad, India. The discovery was almost accidental, the result of a more formal investigation of public schools in those countries that were constructed with funds from the British government's agency for international development. The accounts of individual entrepreneurs' establishment of private schools in make-shift buildings and rented spaces, but with dedicated if underprepared and underpaid teachers, contrast sharply with the corruption that characterizes many of the aid-underwritten public schools. Tooley describes public school classrooms where students are left to their own devices while teachers read newspapers, sleep at their desks, or are absent altogether on the days of his visits. This lack of accountability, he writes, is fueled by an all-pervasive corruption, a system of non-regulation and non-accountability that relies on position and credentials rather than performance and that is permeated by the payment of bribes at every level of government administration. Nor is the corruption limited to government and government agencies. Teachers' unions in many of these countries, he writes, are often only concerned about the self interests of its members – guaranteed employment for life and shorter working hours - than with the educational outcomes for students.

While Tooley's documentation of the existence of private schools in some of the world's poorest countries is impressive and inspiring in its

depiction of the heroic efforts of impoverished parents to educate their children, it doesn't always address questions that the reader will still want to know when he or she is finished reading the book. While he provides some evidence for the higher achievement levels posted by students in private schools, mostly in India, the data are only for students who have completed the fourth grade of schooling. We might assume that this rate of achievement would be maintained through the high school years, but we really don't know because no data are presented for students in later grades, nor can we assume it because, by Tooley's own report, many of the teachers in the private schools have relatively low levels of education themselves, often not exceeding a high school diploma.

Other questions that go unanswered throughout the book concern the analysis of curricula in these schools, accounts of daily activities in classrooms, and descriptions of pedagogical techniques and approaches. Where are they? There is a brief reference to peer or reciprocal teaching in an historical account of private education in India and a reference, almost in passing, to an African educator's interest in Montessori education, but apart from these references, the reader does not know why these schools are more effective than their public counterparts. The most important reason, of course, could simply be that the teachers show up and actually have students do academic work. While teaching methods may be largely rote recitation and memorization of material from dated textbooks, it would still represent an improvement over public schools where teachers don't show up or don't teach when they do.

But perhaps the most important question yet to be answered in regard to the role of private education in meeting the needs of the developing world is one that Tooley himself raises but does not really address. In describing the corruption of public institutions in these countries, he may be identifying the most persistent problem at the root of their failure to move forward. While it may be less true for India and China, which are undergoing rapid economic development if not political reform, the administration of public schools in most of the countries studied appears to be an extension of the corrupt bureaucracies that govern many of these nations. These societies are not meritocracies as we in the west understand that term. As is so often the case in developing countries whose colonial histories have left them with few democratic traditions, the ordinary citizen's advancement may depend on kin-

ship ties, tribal affiliations, or caste rather than demonstrated competence or expertise. As documented by Tooley himself, government posts and positions can provide life-time employment and a means by which to distribute favors and opportunities to other family members or fellow tribesmen. This is especially true in societies where poverty is extensive and there are many fewer opportunities for advancement.

The questions that Tooley ultimately raises are ones that concern the futures of children in these slum communities and rural areas regardless of where they are being educated. One might ask how far they can be expected to advance with rudimentary skills and in societies that operate in this way? Do we not consider the purpose of schooling to be in large part the building of democratic capacity and the transformation of a society? And how will this transformation be possible without a commitment on the part of these societies and their governments to this democratizing vision of education? Within democratic societies there is always room for a robust system of private schools, religious and otherwise, but these schools have always operated without state or federal funds and without considerable regulatory control. The freedom they have to pursue their particular missions in educating children is the trade off for not relying on taxpayer monies. When these private become somewhat less than private, e.g., charter schools in the U.S., they often succumb to the same corrupting influences that characterize the public schools that Tooley rails against in *The Learning Tree*. They become less accountable to the parents they serve, less willing to innovate in ways that bring about real learning and not just better test scores, and much more preoccupied with their own survival.

Tooley has written that perhaps instead of large amounts of aid to foreign governments and their public school systems in the hopes of making education mandatory and universal, smaller amounts of money could be diverted to private school operators and to parents of poor children in their countries in the form of vouchers. Of course, this proposal sounds similar to those that have been enacted by some states and urban school districts in the U.S., given impetus by certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. The results of these initiatives have been mixed, with few parents choosing to use vouchers to find alternative placements for their children for a variety of reasons and many charter schools closing after only a few years for having failed to help students make genuine

academic gains or, in the worst cases, having endured scandals involving misuse of public funds or incompetent accounting practices.

Tooley may be right about wasted billions on aid to public schools systems in these countries, but there are no guarantees that redirected aid to private, for-profit schools would fare any better. Education is a complex enterprise, socially embedded, and is intended to serve the public good. The need for regulation based on rigorous standards and what Linda Darling-Hammond has referred to as “reciprocal accountability” is all too apparent from his descriptions of educational systems in the third world. Leaving government and the larger society out of the picture is in the long run as unworkable as ignoring parents and teachers in this regard. In the end, the education of a nation’s citizens is everyone’s responsibility, and avoiding this reality will not make it any easier for these societies to build democratic and sustainable futures.

Terry Miller is currently Director of Graduate Studies at Wilmington College and Assistant Professor of Education. He primarily teaches foundation courses in the Graduate Program – Educational Research Methods, Contemporary Issues, Assessment, and Educational Psychology, but also teaches child development and foreign language methods courses in the undergraduate program. His background is as a special education teacher and school psychologist. Research interests include foreign language instruction, teacher attitudes toward and assessment of pedagogical theory, and international/comparative education.

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Manuscripts, editorial correspondence, and questions can be directed to Virginia McCormack, Ed. D., The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education, Ohio Dominican University, 1216 Sunbury Rd., Columbus OH 43219-2099, (614) 251-4766 mccormav@ohiodominican.edu

