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The TIPSTER

Volume 3 Issue 2 November 2004

Valdosta State University
College of Education

Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program

GSTEP Teacher Induction

From the Dean's Desk...

“Highly Qualified Teachers” versus “Highly Qualified Teaching”

Certainly by now we are all aware of the requirement in *No Child Left Behind* that by the 2005-2006 school year, all states are to have a plan that ensures that all teachers be “highly qualified.” Clarification of the term “highly qualified” indicates that the teacher: 1) holds a minimum of a bachelor’s degree, 2) has demonstrated competence in each academic subject area that is taught by her/him, and 3) has full state certification to teach in the areas in which she/he teaches. Many believe that the law, however, allows too much flexibility in how teachers can demonstrate subject matter knowledge to achieve a highly qualified ranking; they fear the anticipated result of highly flexible means of demonstrating subject matter competence could be no meaningful change in the content expertise of teachers (Southern Regional Education Board, 2004, *Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom*). Certainly, a case to ponder is the “test-out” option for demonstration of content knowledge; that is, in several states a teacher can demonstrate subject matter competence and, in turn, become certified in that area and therefore “highly qualified,” simply by passing a test.

A second important component of *No Child Left Behind* is that “the law requires schools to show adequate yearly progress (AYP) towards meeting the goal of 100% proficiency in reading and math for all students, in grades 3 through 8, within 12 years” (Council for Exceptional Children, 2003, *No Child Left*

Behind Act of 2001: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act – A Technical Assistance Report, p. 7). One is left with the assumption that by putting 1 (highly qualified teachers) and 1 (AYP for all students) together, they equal 2 (students make AYP due to highly qualified teachers). Yet, unless these highly qualified teachers implement high-quality “teaching” behaviors, this assumption is likely erroneous. Perhaps the discrimination we need to be making is a distinction between “highly qualified *teachers*” and “highly qualified *teaching*.”

Part of this dilemma for us as teacher educators and as scholars in higher education is that all of the behaviors correlated with highly qualified teaching have yet to be determined, and many of those determined have yet to be operationalized. We have several texts that give us broad categories of what “highly qualified teaching,” or effective teaching is. For example, Thomas Good and Jere Brophy’s classic text, *Looking in Classrooms* (I have the 8th ed. from 2000.) covers very well the literature regarding the positive impact of many teaching behaviors. Additionally, more recent texts such as Marzano’s (2003) *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action* enhance our understanding of the power of teachers’ behaviors in students’ academic gains by presenting more recent

data regarding the impact of effective teaching. Yet, there are few thorough descriptions of the topographies of teaching behaviors, as well as the quantity needed of those behaviors, to ensure maximum effect on academic achievement. Additionally, little evidence is available to allow teachers to predictably apply those behaviors differentially based on differing needs of students. A recent case in point is the finding of Helwig and Tindell (“An Experimental Analysis of Accommodation Decisions on Large-Scale Mathematics Tests, *Exceptional Children*, 2003) indicating the accuracy of teachers’ predictions of which students would benefit from testing modifications was no better than chance.



With this said, there certainly are some classroom behaviors of teachers (and students), on the other hand, that have overwhelming support (evidence base) as effective “teaching” behaviors. For example, the data suggesting that students achieve better when frequent opportunities to respond are provided is encouraging because we do have data regarding an operational definition for “frequent” based on the literature. Additionally, we do have data regarding the optimal level of accuracy for students’ responding during different types of academic instruction. It appears also that these

(continued on page 4)

The Principal's Perspective

Teacher Tips

In this modern era of education there are a lot of questions, blame, and hostility in our society. This is seen on both sides of the spectrum since parents are not always willing to support the schools, and educators have become more vocal about parents' shortcomings as well. The ultimate loser in this scary scenario always becomes the students.

Communication is the most important factor in providing open and honest dialog with



parents regarding the performance of their children from an academic and behavioral standpoint.

With this in mind, I would like to provide the following information regarding parent conferences:

Parent Conferences: Easy As ABC

- A - Agenda, Have one!
- B - Be business like
- C - Communicate with parents
- D - Do not argue or become defensive
- E - Enthusiasm for your job is a must!
- F - Follow- up on the conference with a note or phone call

G - Goal of the conference is to help the student or to solve the problem

H - Helpfulness will gain parents' cooperation

I - Involve parents and students in developing a plan

J - Join parents in a partnership to solve the problem

K - Know in advance the concerns of the parents

L - Listen! Listen! Listen!

M - Make sure parents understand the problem

N - No surprises for the parents should be presented during the conference

O - Omit negative, unnecessary comments

P - Positive and Professional attitudes must be in place

Q - Question parents about the student's study habits

R - Record minutes or notes and suggestions for resolution from the conference to be provided to parents

S - Strategies for improvement need to be developed and explained

T - Talk to parents as you would want them to talk to you

U - Understand the parents' point of view

V - Vary your explanations depending on the parents' needs

W - Warm greetings will get the conference off to a good start

X - Xenophobia may be a condition of the parents and you should make them comfortable

Y - You, the teacher should control the conference

Z - Zero in on specific problem areas to attack

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TechnoInfo Corner

Cutting Edge Technology:

The Tablet PC & Teacher Candidate Observation Instrument

The GSTEP Technology Committee has just received a new cutting edge technology tool, the Hewlett-Packard Tablet PC. This has been a dream project in the making for three years for the GSTEP Technology Committee.

The tablet PC is on the cutting edge because it is both a laptop and a tablet computer. The screen for the laptop can be removed and it becomes a tablet computer with the advanced capabilities of a tablet. The tablet PC allows a person to write using a special pen on the tablet screen. The handwriting is interpreted by the computer and can be inserted into a document as text.

The GSTEP vision was to provide technology that would assist faculty while evaluating

teacher candidates teaching in their field classrooms. The Early Childhood and Reading Education Department faculty have the opportunity this semester to pilot the four tablet PCs while observing and evaluating their teacher candidates.

If the pilot proves to be successful maybe this would encourage school systems and universities to purchase the tablet PC to be use as a tool by teachers and administrators.



Dr. Diane Judd
Early Childhood & Reading Education
Chair, GSTEP Technology

This is an on-going collaborative project of the Technology Committee, chaired by Dr. Diane Judd, and the GSTEP Teacher Observation Instrument Committee, chaired by Dr. Lynn Minor.

Nothing that grieves us can be called little: by the eternal laws of proportion, a child's loss of a doll and a king's loss of a crown are events of the same size.

Mark Twain

Planting a Seed



Got a minute? Inspire a teacher!

Have you found yourself counting days until Christmas vacation, or maybe you have found a conspicuous place on your desk for the serenity prayer. Perhaps you've begged for relief in whatever form it may take—new teachers need inspiration, and they need it often.

All teachers, both new and veteran, know that teaching is a difficult and often thankless job. Fortunately, I came to the teaching profession with some solid advice—"If you're going into teaching for the money, leave now and choose another profession." "Teaching will take lots of practice. It's not something that can be learned in school."

And most significantly, "If you don't love children, you are wasting your time—and more importantly theirs." The children are the reason that we are in this profession to start with.

I am a new teacher this year, and I am so thrilled to be in this profession. I have known since the eighth grade that I wanted to teach, but I came to the field late. I also came green—

I am straight out of college, with a B.A. in English, and no teaching experience. Well, let me correct that—no prior teaching experience. One thing teaching does is cast a person straight into the teaching experience. I have experienced the difficulties of getting (and obtaining) student attention, the behavioral problems of students, and the everyday frustrations of having endless paperwork, too many meetings during planning, and all other duties assigned... Does teaching come without its sorrows and frustrations? No, but then again, neither does any other job in this country.

In this endless sea of being swept back and forth, it is often difficult to find the inspiration to continue in this field. When the days are long and Christmas vacation seems years away, look out at the faces of those children you teach. They are the reason you are there. Teaching is the most wonderful profession in the world. It is there that a person has the ability to mold lives, shape minds, and change the attitudes of the future. Those children are our tomorrow, and they need a good, solid education, good role models, and the knowledge that someone cares. When I become frustrated and wonder why I'm teaching, I think of my students. I think of the ones

who I have seen change, the attitudes I have turned around, the bridges I have built towards repairing some of the injustices in these young people's lives. They are my inspiration, and each hour of the day, my room is full of smiling, lively, bundles of inspiration—though often hyper and full of live. These children need us, let me repeat that—they need us—to be a solid force in their lives and to give them the encouragement to rise above where they are now, both academically and socially. I find inspira-

tion in knowing that my students can count on me.

As I end this article, I am thinking of a student who

followed me all over the room during bus duty one afternoon. As my nerves began to fray, I looked at her and asked, "What do you need?" The student replied, "Nothing, Mrs. Crawford. I just love you." That is why I go back.

Kimberly M. Crawford
7th Grade Language Arts Teacher
J. L. Newbern Middle School

**In working with students...
Be Firm, Fair, and Consistent!**



You are invited to attend the 5th Annual Georgia Regional Academic Service Learning Conference

**"Blast from the Past"
Civics, Citizenship & Service**

January 14, 2005

Valdosta High School

Fine Arts Center

3101 N. Forrest Street

Valdosta, GA 31602

Registration – 8:00 – 8:30

Conference - 8:30 – 12:30

Visit the Service Learning link at

www.teacherresourcebank.com

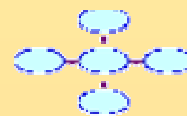
to register for conference

Idea Corner

According to Scholastic, Inc., a children's publishing and media company, Graphic Organizers help teachers observe students' thinking processes and assess students' understanding of what is read as a class, as a group, or independently.

Graphic Organizers can be used at any grade level. For examples and tips for using Graphic Organizers visit:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/graphicorg>



Webbing

The British are Coming! The British are Coming!

Since the first International Service Learning Exchange in 1998, the cry “the British are coming—the British are coming” has rung throughout Valdosta City Schools. In an effort to increase cultural understanding, renew the spirit of citizenship, and provide a broader connection to the global community, the Valdosta City School System has been paired with Colne Community School in Brightlingsea, England for over six years.

Through the efforts of partnerships with Valdosta State University and over fifty businesses and agencies in the Valdosta area, the international service learning exchange has become noted around the world. According to information provided from the United Kingdom, this partnership between Valdosta City Schools and Colne Community School is one of the most successful global partnerships ever formed.

How did it all begin? At the Southeastern service learning conference in Orlando, FL, a team of 25 student and staff presenters from Valdosta City Schools was invited to present their “Roundup of Service Learning” in London, England, at the First International Service Learning Conference.

As a result, the Valdosta City School System was one of four systems in the United States selected to participate in the first international service learning exchange.

Students, ages 12 to 15, from the school system have been targeted to meet the challenges presented to them in this unique exchange. During each exchange, the Valdosta students were paired with British partners, exchanged email prior to meeting in person, and then experienced a new culture as they provided a service to the school and community during the exchange process, which lasts approximately ten days on each side of the pond. During the first exchange, the emphasis was on Victorian history, and the partners produced a book of historical comparisons between the two locations. The second exchange, which was science oriented, led to the development of the PAWSmobile, a mobile science lab for Valdosta City Schools. With the emphasis on citizenship during the third exchange, the students planned and hosted the Georgia Regional Service Learning Conference. The current exchange will emphasize fine arts, and the students will receive their new challenges for that exchange when the British arrive.

In January of 2005, the British are coming again with 25 students and four sponsors. The emphasis of this exchange will be in the Fine Arts area and will be culminated with the regional service learning conference to be held at the new Valdosta High School Fine Arts facility on Friday, January 14th. Valdosta State University will be hosting this conference in conjunction with Communities in Schools of Valdosta and Valdosta City Schools.

Special thanks is extended to the GSTEP staff at Valdosta State University from Valdosta City Schools for making this partnership a reality. Yes, the British are coming again, and we hope you will be there to greet them. Join us at the Regional Service Learning Conference on January 14th and welcome our friends from “across the pond.” Registration is free to the first 200 participants and is available online at www.teacherresourceroom.com.

See you there!

Vickie Burt
Service Learning Director



“Highly Qualified Teachers” versus “Highly Qualified Teaching”... Continued from page 1

optimal levels of eliciting responses from students and monitoring the response accuracy can be achieved through a variety of instructional constructs (e.g., explicit instruction, peer-directed instruction, inquiry-based instruction).

So while we might not know everything, and I do not believe that we do, we do know some things. My contention is that we select those very powerful behaviors for which we have overwhelming empirical support as being effective at leading to positive change in academic achievement and ensure that those are in the forefront of our candidates’ repertoires of “highly qualified teaching” behaviors. Certainly, training programs should not be limited to just those teaching skills, but we should be sure that our candidates leave us “fluent” in use of effective “teaching” behaviors.

Several years ago, I co-authored a couple of papers (e.g., “Teacher escape, avoidance, and countercontrol

behaviors: Potential responses to disruptive and aggressive behaviors of children with severe behavior disorders,” 1994, *Journal of Child and Family Studies*) theorizing the aversive elements in classroom settings that might account for the large, untimely exodus of new teachers from the profession. Georgia’s Chancellor Thomas Meredith indicates that in this state, 46% of teachers new to the profession are no longer teaching after 5 years. These numbers are similar to national numbers; for example, Ingersoll (2003, “Four myths about America’s teacher quality problem”) used the exact same 46% to describe this phenomena nationally. In short, my colleagues and I, concluded that failure to use effective teaching behaviors perhaps leads to coercive classroom interactions; teacher escape from these interactions was provided as a contribution to the reported teacher shortage. Since then, several studies, including one recently out of Valdosta State University (Gunter, Reffel, Barnett, Lee, & Patrick, 2004, “Academic response rates in elementary school classrooms,” *Education and Treatment of Children*) seem to support the notion that effective

teaching behaviors in some classrooms may not be occurring at desirous levels.

What a wonderful goal for the next few years—determining the most effective teaching behaviors our candidates need to produce “highly qualified teaching,” ensuring that our candidates are fluent in those teaching behaviors before they leave us, and evaluating the impact of “highly qualified teaching” on our P-12 learners. Perhaps we might find keys to address the challenge of AYP for *all* learners.

Dr. Philip L. Gunter
Dean, College of Education
Valdosta State University



Notes from the GSTEP Director's Desk



This school year is off to a good beginning. Faculty from P-12 schools and higher education are collaborating in a variety of GSTEP projects designed to improve teacher preparation practices and support teacher development. In this issue's column I'd like to share with you the

work of our Content Discipline, Service Learning, and Induction Committees and invite you to become involved in their undertakings. In future columns I'll describe the work of our other committees and detail how you might become involved in their work as well.

Let's begin by examining the work of the Content Discipline Committee, our oldest standing committee associated with GSTEP at VSU. Established in 1998, this committee is affiliated with the Standards Based Teacher Education Program (STEP) co-

sponsored by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and the Council on Basic Education. At VSU, we have established four sub-committees representing the content areas of

mathematics, science, social studies, and the language arts. Each committee has representation of higher education faculty from the Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences. Over the years the committees have developed content standards for teacher preparation programs based on national standards of professional organizations, the PRAXIS II examinations, and Georgia's state standards; i.e., the Quality Core Curriculum. Committee members have aligned these content standards with course work from early childhood, middle grades, and secondary education programs to

determine if all teacher candidates have opportunities to learn the content needed to meet the teaching standards. This examination has led to major changes in teacher preparation programs at VSU, such as the addition of courses in reading and mathematics in the early childhood program and revised programs of study in middle grades and secondary education programs reflective of content taught at these levels. Currently, committee members are focusing on three tasks: the alignment of content standards for teacher preparation to the new Georgia Performance Standards; the development/identification of assessments to determine teacher candidate's knowledge of content standards; and the preparation of applications to the Professional Standards Commission for mathematics and reading endorsements for graduates of the early childhood teacher preparation program. If you are interested in finding out more about these activities, please contact Dr. Barbara Stanley

(bstanley@valdosta.edu), committee chair for the Content Discipline Committees.

The GSTEP Service Learning Committee at VSU, led by Dr. David Monetti, has worked to implement and support academic service learning

projects in the P-12 and higher education sectors. Their many endeavors have included the development of a video describing the components of service learning, the establishment of a directory of volunteer opportunities for college students, and the co-sponsorship of conferences and service learning provider training with the Georgia Department of Education. At present, the committee is hard at work planning this year's Service Learning Conference scheduled for January 14, 2005 at Valdosta High School's Fine Arts Center. The theme for this year's conference is

The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn.

John Lubbock

"Blast from the Past: Civics, Citizenship, and Service". To find out more about this year's conference and the work of the Service Learning Committee, log on the VSU Teacher Resource Bank Website at: www.teacherresourcebank.com.

GSTEP induction efforts at VSU are facilitated by Dr. Shirley Andrews. In addition to editing the "Tipster" newsletter, she has worked collaboratively with Valdosta City and Cook County Schools to develop comprehensive induction programs for their respective school districts. Furthermore, she has worked with several other school districts to train beginning teacher mentors utilizing a TSS redelivery system that she was instrumental in developing. A major accomplishment last year was the sponsorship on an induction conference attended by school districts teams interested in learning more about induction programs in the United States. A result of this conference was the establishment of a committee comprised of public school and higher education educators who are working to develop a comprehensive induction handbook that will assist school personnel establish/develop beginning teacher support programs in their districts. This model handbook will have sections appropriate for school leaders, mentors, and beginning teachers. Upon completion, the handbook will be placed online at the VSU Teacher Resource Bank website and will be available for use by interested parties.

Hats off to these energetic committee chairs, Drs. Stanley, Monetti, and Andrews! In the next issue I will share with you the exciting work GSTEP is doing to support teachers seeking certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. I'll also tell you how we are using the GSTEP Accomplished Teaching Framework and technology to support teacher development.

Dr. Pamela Hertzog
GSTEP Director
Valdosta State University

Greetings from the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of the **TIPSTER** newsletter. Deepest gratitude goes to the contributors for this edition who took time from busy schedules to share information from their areas of expertise. Additionally, the publication of this newsletter would truly not be possible without support from Cindy Musgrove and the GSTEP office. **THANK YOU, ALL!**

I again issue you an invitation to share your knowledge and expertise by sending in contributions to the newsletter. You could write an article or share an idea for *Idea Corner*. Contributions may be mailed to the GSTEP office or submitted to me via email (spandrew@valdosta.edu) or fax (229-333-7167). I wish for you a happy, safe, and restful holiday season.

Shirley Andrews, Editor



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(229) 333-5611 Middle Grades & Secondary Education
(229) 333-5930 Psychology & Counseling
(229) 333-5932 Special Ed & Communication Disorders



RESOURCES

Online

Merriam-Webster On-line

More than an on-line dictionary, this site includes search features, word studies, a word of the day, and more:
<http://www.m-w.com/>

The Teacher Connection at Phi Delta Kappa International

Resources for teachers and features *Ask the Teacher Across the Hall*:
<http://www.pdkintl.org/tconnect/tchome.htm>

The Gateway to Education Materials (GEM)

A tool for teachers to access educational materials such as lesson plans, instructional units, books, etc:
<http://www.thegateway.org>

The Federal Resources for Educational Excellence (FREE)

Provides free resources to teachers; updated frequently with new materials and daily highlights:
<http://www.ed.gov/free/index.html>

Print Material

Suggested Book for New Teachers and Mentors:

101 "Answers" for New Teachers & Their Mentors: Effective Teaching Tips for Daily Classroom Use
Author: Annette L. Breaux
Publication Date: November 2002
Publisher: Eye on Education
ISBN: 1930556489

EVENTS

- * Service Learning Conference
January 14, 2005, Valdosta High School
For more information visit:
www.teacherresourcebank.com
- * Share the Wealth Physical Education Conference
January 27-29, 2005, Jekyll Island, GA
For more information visit the web site:
<http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/stw/>
- * Project Learning Tree
FREE workshops will be held on February 5 and March 5, 2005 in the Education Center at VSU.
For more information visit the web site:
<http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/plt>
- * Literacy Conference
"Looking at Student Work with Critical Friends"
February 26, 2005 For more information contact:
Dr. Sheryl Dasinger: sbdasing@valdosta.edu



If you have an event you would like announced in the *TIPSTER* send information to the editor at:
spandrew@valdosta.edu



A copy of the *TIPSTER* is just a click away:
Download your copy from the Teacher Resource Bank web site:
<http://borg.valdosta.edu/doc/VSUResourceBank.nsf>