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May 26, 2010

Dr. Linda Noble
Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs
University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-1450

Dear Dr. Noble and Members of the Regents Excellence Awards Committee:

It is my pleasure to nominate the Department of Early Childhood and Middle Grades Education, housed in the John H. Lounsbury College of Education, for the USG BOR Department/Program Teaching Excellence award. This program was selected by Georgia College & State University faculty in a series of six stakeholder conferences held as part of our Strategic Focusing Initiative as one of our Academic Programs of Distinction, but it has long been a leader in the state and in the nation. This program was one of the early leaders in the field of Middle Grades Education and still is a model program that others strive to emulate. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, GCSU faculty member Dr. John H. Lounsbury led middle grades educators in statewide lobbying to convince the Georgia Department of Education to initiate a middle grades certification requirement. Simultaneously, faculty at GCSU took the first steps in developing the current middle grades teacher preparation program and implemented a Junior High Endorsement. As the value of a fully developed program became evident, in 1978 GCSU implemented a Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education, leading to licensure for grades 4-8 and certification to teach in all four content areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). These efforts created a reputation for Georgia as a national leader in middle grades education and GCSU has been regarded as an institutional leader in middle grades teacher preparation for more than thirty years.

With a history of the progressive ideas and vision of leaders like GCSU's Dr. John H. Lounsbury, the current Department of Early Childhood and Middle Grades Education is challenged daily to maintain the statewide reputation they have achieved. The evidence of student and faculty achievement in this portfolio will demonstrate that they continue to achieve their goals in this respect, and former and current students, school administrators, teacher educators, and the public-at-large continue to point to GCSU's Early Childhood and Middle Grades teacher preparation programs as exemplary.

The faculty members of this department consistently demonstrate superior teaching, outstanding scholarship, and service. Their programs produce both undergraduate and graduate students who are recognized and recruited statewide for their excellent preparation. The programs have a 99% job placement rate. Statewide graduates of the Early Childhood and Middle Grades programs are recognized as highly effective teachers, and principals rated 91% of their beginning teachers as "good" or "excellent" on performing their teaching duties, according to a recent College of Education Survey. Principals seek out Georgia College students for mock interviews because it gives them an opportunity to recruit upcoming graduates.

More importantly, graduates of the Early Childhood and Middle Grades programs elect to remain in the profession. When nationally 30% of beginning teacher leave the classroom by the third year out and 50 % by

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*Georgia College & State University, established in 1889, is Georgia's Public Liberal Arts University.
University System of Georgia*

the fifth year out, graduates of our programs remain and grow in the profession: five to eight years after graduation, 91% of the graduates of our Early Childhood and Middle Grades programs are teaching in classrooms or in other P-12 roles – a figure that is double the national and state retention rates.

The success and reputation of our graduates are largely due to the innovative mentored, field based cohort model, which provides Mentor Leaders that follow cohorts through their entire educational career. It ensures extensive and diverse field experience grounded in a solid liberal arts education. The Department fosters a strong ethic of collaboration that faculty model daily for students. It places a strong emphasis on developing both graduates and undergraduates as *Architects of Change* who are the educational leaders of the future.

The Early Childhood and Middle Grades Education faculty readily embrace new technologies and other changes, but remain firm in their commitment to the standards that ground their programs. The faculty continually challenges students to high standards, and serve as an exemplary role model of self-assessment, professional development, and scholarly activity. Students are expected to participate in service learning projects and action research, to submit proposals for state level conferences and to give presentations, to conduct substantive school-level projects, and to write for publication. The Department promotes opportunities for teacher candidates to develop as *Architects of Change* and as the educational leaders of the future. For example, with the support of faculty, students have organized two very vibrant student organizations -- Georgia Association on Young Children (GAYC) and Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA) – both of which offer Georgia College students leadership opportunities at the local, state, and national level. The faculty are reflective practitioners and practice continuous assessment “of” and “for” learning that leads to revision of courses and programs.

Finally, the faculty of this department exemplifies an ethic of collaboration. Faculty collaborate with each other, other departments in the College of Education, colleagues in the College of Arts and Sciences, host teachers and administrators in partner schools, and particularly to students. They form faculty writing groups and book circles, work together to reflect on assessment and other information in Mentor Leader and program meetings, co-teach courses. Faculty conduct collaborative research, such as that of Drs. Schwartz and Digiovanni with Dr. Chris Greer from Instructional Technology on students’ use of iPod technology; and that of Drs. Kleine, Deneroff, Bauer, and Previts from Middle Grades with Drs. Gleason, Melancon, Richards, Farrar and Ms. Shiver from the College of Arts and Sciences on the collaboration process. Departmental faculty make daily efforts to develop community within and across student cohorts and in projects with individual students. Data in the portfolio demonstrate that faculty have readily included graduate students in several of the STEM grants written over the last two years and that they have also routinely invited students to participate in their research and writing projects.

While Dr. Lounsbury’s pioneering efforts laid the foundations for this Department to become a nationally-recognized “Architect of Change,” our programs still remain on the cutting edge of teacher preparation and among the premiere programs in the country. Upon review of this portfolio, it is my belief that you will see why this program has produced 26 teachers recognized as Teachers of the Year for their schools and 8 selected as Teachers of the Year for the District over the last four years alone just in Middle Georgia. I am delighted to nominate this Department for the BOR Excellence in Teaching Awards for Departments/Programs.

Respectfully,



Sandra Jordan

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

GCSU Early Childhood and Middle Grades Education Fact Sheet

Exemplary programs dedicated to excellence in creating and sustaining passionate and professional educators as *Architects of Change* – as educational leaders of the future

Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Program: 8 full-time faculty • Middle Grades Program: 6 full-time faculty • Reading: 3 full-time faculty • Total: 17
Noteworthy Faculty Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Childhood and Middle Grades programs are integral to the Mentored, Field-Based Cohort (MFBC) model, recognized as a Georgia College Academic Program of Distinction. Presently, all faculty are involved in the MFBC model as teachers field supervisors or Mentor Leaders. • Dr. Stacy Schwartz and Dr. Nancy Mizelle have led Georgia College and the state by organizing Georgia College chapters of two professional student organizations - GAYC (Georgia Association for Young Children) and CMLA (Collegiate Middle Level Association), serving diligently as chapter advisors, and acting as role models for Early Childhood and Middle Grades faculty throughout the state interested in establishing CMLA and GAYC chapters. • Dr. Virginia Wilcox has developed a statewide Higher Ed Users Group (of Interactive boards) and been selected by the group as its first President. • Dr. Trish Klein helped found and served as the first President of the Georgia Coalition for the Improvement of Social Studies, organized under the auspices of the GCSS to advance social studies education through advocacy, research, and networking. • Dr. Lyndall Muschell contributed a chapter to a book, <i>Personal~Passionate~Participatory Inquiry into Social Justice in Education</i>, edited by Ming Fang He and JoAnn Phillion, which received the Outstanding Book Recognition Award from AERA's Division B (Curriculum Studies) • Over the last 3 years, faculty have been awarded a number of internal and external grants totaling \$410,900.
Students Enrolled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Juniors/Seniors : 79 • Middle Grades Juniors and Seniors: 39 • Middle Grades MAT : 3 • Early Childhood MS.EDS: 70 • Middle Grades MS/EDS: 30
Noteworthy Student Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 93% of our Early Childhood and Middle School candidates are employed as teachers in Georgia's public schools the year they graduate • Principals consistently rate more than 90% of our beginning teachers as "excellent" or "good" at performing their teaching duties. • Graduates remain in the profession – five years out 91% of our graduates are teaching in classrooms or in other P12 roles, a rate that is double the national retention rate of 50%. • Teacher Candidates routinely develop and demonstrate leadership within their Cohorts and beyond. In 2009-2010 alone, 13 different students held office in student professional organizations, taking on such leadership roles as chairing the Summit Committee and organizing the fifth annual statewide Middle Level Summit – attended by approximately 150 middle level teacher candidates and teacher educators from 10 campuses across the state of Georgia. • During the last academic year, 39 of the 40 seniors presented 41 professional, peer-reviewed conference presentations at state, regional, national, and international conferences.

Narrative Statement
Department of Early Childhood & Middle Grades Education
Georgia College & State University

The Department of Early Childhood and Middle Grades Education is firmly committed to making a positive difference in the academic success of students at the preK-12 level as well as those students completing post-secondary work to earn degrees in Education. As one of GCSU's *Academic Programs of Distinction*, our work is well known in schools where our graduates teach. Ninety-one percent of College of Education graduates are still teaching five years after graduation, which is in direct contrast to the national rate that approaches fifty percent (Allen, 2005; Ingersoll, 2004). Prior to our current economic climate, we had a 99% placement rate of graduates in the field, in part due to the preparation and professionalism of our students as they interview. Many of our graduates embrace the idea of being *Architects of Change*, as evidenced by the number of graduates found on school leadership teams, and being recognized as Teachers of the Year for their local schools or districts (11 in 2010 that were reported to us). These statistics are made possible by dedicated staff and students who choose GCSU because of our reputation for being a stellar teacher preparation program. We have found that the best way to prepare teachers is to be intentional in matching our philosophies and goals with our strategies for creating and sustaining passionate and professional educators. Consequently, the discussion of our philosophies, goals and strategies is not presented in separate categories, but integrated throughout our application materials. We make an impact on the academic success of our students through the development of learning communities, theory-informed/standards-based practice, being reflective practitioners, and collaboration in teaching, research, and service activities.

Criteria:

- **Individual and collective faculty efforts to improve teaching and student learning**
- **Exemplary programs for advising, mentoring, recruiting, and retaining students (co-curricular work with students; out-of-class learning)**
- **Active support to enable faculty to use innovative and effective forms of pedagogy and technology, e.g., critical thinking, collaborative learning, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, learning communities, etc.**

The Mentored Field-Based Cohort Model

Our distinctive mentored field-based cohort model develops powerful learning communities that impact learning. The mentored field-based cohort model is predicated on a philosophy and a goal of faculty collaboration to improve our programs and our teaching. The cohort program has become the primary strategy through which we develop community among our students, who move through the program as a group, take classes together and, where appropriate, participate in field experiences in the same locations. In our undergraduate program, the use of a Mentor Leader -- one faculty member assigned to each cohort -- aids in the success of this strategy.

The *Mentor Leader*, a person who is experienced both as a classroom teacher and as a teacher educator, is one of the unique and key elements to the success of our undergraduate, field-based program. The Mentor Leader begins and ends the two-year undergraduate program with a cohort of teacher candidates. During those two years the students have a variety of experiences with multiple teachers, school settings, and diverse groups of children. However, the Mentor Leader remains a constant and provides stability to the experience while performing many roles for his/her cohort from instructor, to field supervisor, to mentor, to cheerleader, to "parent" away from home. Mentor Leaders guide the professional development of the pre-service teachers: They make decisions regarding field placements and match students with Host Teachers based on the requirements of the program as well as on their professional judgment of the personalities and developmental needs of each individual student;

and they provide course instruction as well as supervision of field placements for their cohort students, thus giving Mentor Leaders the opportunity to guide students in making connections between theory and practice. Using models of inquiry, Mentor Leaders assist their students in learning how to reflect on the connections between teaching and learning as the students develop instructional and critical thinking skills. This emphasis on inquiry and reflection is continuously reinforced by the Mentor Leader and helps guide candidates in the development of their own individual philosophies of teaching. Examples of our reflective practices are included later in this nomination portfolio. The Mentor Leaders also aid in developing community among faculty. They meet together regularly as the "Mentor Leader Group" to celebrate successes, to share concerns, to orient new Mentor Leaders who are teaching and supervising cohort students, and to provide ongoing professional development.

The undergraduate cohort programs within our department are very deliberate about *infusing theory with practice* throughout. Coursework that focuses on theory and pedagogy are supported by fieldwork the moment students enter the programs. During the junior year, students are placed in four different settings, two each semester. They spend 16 – 20 hours each week in a classroom setting under the guidance of a Host Teacher who has been specially selected to supervise the student. In their senior year, students spend an entire semester in a single placement and may, if progressing appropriately, be allowed to stay with the same Host Teacher for an entire year. During fall semester of their senior year, students spend half of the semester in their college classes and the other half full time in the classroom. They begin the semester with their Host Teachers in pre-planning so that they can experience the beginning of the school year, and before the semester is over, they engage in full-time teaching for a minimum of three weeks. During spring semester of their senior year, the students are in their school placements full time for ten weeks and are totally in charge of the classroom for a minimum of four weeks. Graduates from the Early Childhood or Middle Grades Programs have well over 1000 hours of solid classroom experience and a firm understanding of how to apply theory to practice. Consequently, connections to theory and standards presented in the college classroom are much easier to make because students have an opportunity to test the theories and standards in an authentic setting. As a result, most students complete exit portfolios at levels that show not just mastery, but exceptional understanding (see data on student achievement in the packet).

These experiences are supervised by GCSU faculty, whose teaching doesn't end at the college classroom door, but is reiterated in the P-8 classroom context. Rather than leave this task to clinical practitioners, as many larger institutions do, the visibility of our faculty in schools helps our students make the connections between theory and practice and helps them recognize that what occurs in the college classroom doesn't exist in a vacuum.

Mentor leaders model a commitment to professional engagement beyond coursework. Our programs foster additional engagement with activities outside of the classroom among our students. The current Middle Grades seniors have hosted two Middle Level Summits with national keynote speakers, all twenty have presented at a state or national level conference (during a time when there was no Georgia Middle School Association conference), eight of them are officers in Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA), GCSU students hosted the national CMLA Leadership meeting, one and GCSU student earned the Leadership endorsement (only the second person in GCSU's history to do so).

While more opportunities have been present for our Middle Grades Students to be involved in professional organizations and conferences, our Early Childhood program recognized the need for student advocacy and created those opportunities for our students within the Georgia Association for Young Children (GAYC). SGAYC is the first student organization of GAYC/NAEYC in the state of Georgia, and has had great influence on the statewide conference sponsored by GAYC. GCSU students have changed the conference from a place where students were seen as volunteers to a place where students now present and lead. Tracks at the conference are now specifically designed for the college students' interest. Because of our student leadership GAYC has made a place for student voice in an elected position on the state board. GCSU SGAYC has now been asked to take the lead in developing other early childhood student groups across the state.

This and other evidence of student achievement presented later in the portfolio documents the profound impact of our field-based, mentored cohort model.

Criteria

- **Methods of assessment of student learning and achievement that go beyond student evaluations, use of assessment results to inform teaching practices, and curriculum development and revision**
- **An on-going and data-driven process for reviewing and reshaping curricula so that achieving academic excellence and serving the needs of all students remain as top priorities.**

Our faculty members are exemplars of reflective practice. Reflection takes the form of inquiry, research, and continual improvement. We utilize student input about our teaching through course evaluation and other feedback from our students to reconsider and refine course structure and content on a continual basis. Data collected from course evaluations and feedback is used to modify and adapt course requirements to better meet students' interests and learning needs and to improve the quality of instruction. This practice is not enough, though. A remarkable strength of our faculty is the desire to reflect on and make changes to practice to ensure that students are meeting standards. We accomplish this reflection through program meetings, Critical Friends meetings (a group of our faculty that meets to discuss faculty concerns regarding teaching and student learning; various protocols are used to examine possibilities with work brought to the group), mentor leader meetings, as well as informal discussions among faculty. A prime example of this reflective practice is in the revision of the "Teacher Work Sample (TWS)," a semester long project that takes students through the unit planning process that includes collecting ideas, determining learning goals, thinking through assessment, planning for teaching, teaching the unit, assessing learning, and reflecting upon the process. While we have utilized this project for a number of years, knowledge gained from new faculty as well as things learned while supervising in schools led to the need to match the process closer to the "backward design" process discussed in many schools by principals during the candidate interview process. We recognized that our students needed to have an understanding of the language and the process so they could both speak to and demonstrate their knowledge and ability. We recognized that our assignment did teach the process, but the language that was being communicated in courses and conversations was not the language of the TWS experiences and assignments. Rubrics for this project were revised to reflect these changes and to match NMSA/NAEYC standards for program assessment. One assignment in particular was added to the TWS to purposefully engage the teacher candidates in "getting to know" the students, school, and community where they are placed during the planning and implementation of the TWS. The reason was to help them to be more reflective on the importance of this knowledge on planning for and working with children and their families. (See the examples of reflective practice included in the packet).

Several courses have been developed or revised because of student needs. These include a new physical science course, co-developed by department faculty with Arts & Science faculty, to account for the wider variation of content knowledge of pre-service teachers, the development of a new math course to meet student needs in Area F, as well as the revision of several early childhood education courses to better connect technology applications being taught in educational technology courses to theory and practice. This last project in particular resulted in an intensive Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project between members of both the ECMG department and Foundations & Secondary departments.

Criterion: Department/unit policies that encourage collaborative faculty efforts

In addition to the cohort model described above, our programs model and foster collaboration among class sections, programs, departments, across campus, and among our students. The ethic of collaboration permeates our programs. The undergraduate initial teacher preparation program in the College of Education involves students and professors from three different areas: Special Education,

Early Childhood Education, and Middle Grades Education. As stated in the Student Handbook, “The underlying assumption about a collaborative team is that all members of the team are equal and interdependent. Successful collaboration includes the following: mutual goals, shared participation, shared resources, shared respect, shared accountability, and shared competencies.” (Student Handbook, p. 29). The field-based program, as it exists today, is the result of consistent collaborative planning over many years. The Mentor Leaders meet together on a regular basis in both large (all people involved in the program) and small groups (e.g., junior Mentor Leaders, senior Mentor Leaders). Unlike other service done by faculty, these meetings are entirely voluntary and as a result have produced innovative solutions to problems, standards of evaluation that are consistent across departments, and implementation of constructivist strategies into classes and field experiences. Collaboration has resulted in the development of a Mentor Leader Handbook that serves as a guide to new mentor leaders and provides consistency to the program.

Courses in our department are a good example of the collaboration that we model and expect with our students. The middle grades program has worked diligently with faculty members within the College of Arts & Sciences to strengthen the middle grades program. This collaboration resulted in a presentation at the February AACTE Conference between three department faculty members and three A&S faculty members where they presented on their six-year collaboration entitled “Crossing the Street: A&S and Education Faculty Collaborating to Improve Middle Grades Teacher Preparation.” The early childhood program has collaborated across campus with the math department as we have worked together to design, evaluate, and improve math education courses. Within the Early Childhood program, each and every course carries with it an element of collaboration between instructors--an element that help us to insure the attainment of program specific goals and standards as well as the quality and consistency of the program itself. We use several models of collaboration from co-teaching, teaching modules, and collaborative planning. This collaboration has resulted in presentations and articles on collaborative teaching across departments within the College of Education as well as collaboration on research with colleague in other colleges. Such collaborations are rewarded in our tenure and promotion policy.

Several collaborative grant projects have benefitted other institutions and the surrounding community. A majority of STEM grants awarded to many of our faculty are for projects within local schools (see list of grants on the “faculty achievements” page in the nomination packet). A collaborative effort resulted in funding for a National Writing Project (NWP) site at GCSU. As one of approximately 200 funded sites nationwide, this project supports the participation of sixteen exemplary teachers in an intensive Summer Institute each June. The CGWP is a longitudinal P-12 teacher professional development program designed to support effective writing instruction and teacher leadership. Grant-writers Drs. Bauer and Bradley have brought more than \$165,000 through the CGWP. Each year of funding requires a one-to-one cash or in-kind match demonstrating host institution and local community support. Matching funds were provided by collaboration between the GCSU Colleges of Education and Arts & Sciences as well as external organizations, such as Oconee RESA. This powerful collaboration connects department faculty, graduate students, and in-service teachers through ongoing professional development and rigorous inquiry. We have formed similar partnerships with Fort Valley State University and local county public schools to initiate a Center for Adolescent & Adult Literacy & Learning (CAALL).

Faculty also collaborate with students, who have been co-presenters at conferences and co-authors of publications and/or STEM grant projects with our faculty (see the data on student achievement).

References

Allen, M. B. (2005). Eight questions on teacher recruitment and retention: What does the research say? Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). Why do high poverty schools have difficulty staffing their classrooms with qualified teachers? Washington, DC: Center on American Progress and the Institute for Americas Future. Retrieved May 1, 2010, from <http://www.americanprogress.org/kf/ingersoll-final.pdf>

Summary of Faculty Accomplishments, 2008-2010

Even with a four-course teaching load, the Early Childhood, Middle Grades, and Reading faculty generate an impressive record of service for Georgia College & State University. Faculty serve as Mentor Leaders who shepherd students through the IRB process and supervise Honor's projects and as senate members in positions of leadership. They serve on a number of committees in the College of Education and across the campus, often in the role of chair; they are actively involved in local schools and in their community; and they give generously to the profession.

	2008 11 Faculty		2009 12 Faculty		2010 15 Faculty	
Accomplishments	Number	Number of Faculty Involved	Number	Number of Faculty Involved	Number	Number of Faculty Involved
Publications	6	3	6	7	9	8
Presentations	34	9	36	12	36	15
National/International	20	8	25	10	17	12
State/Regional/Local	14	6	11	7	19	12
Co-presented with Students	8	5	5	5	4	3
Current Work in Circulation/in Progress	14	8	21	9	26	12
Publications	12	7	13	6	19	8
Presentations	2	2	16	7	9	8
Grants Received or Applied For	13	7	15	9	21	11
Professional Service	19	8	21	7	23	12
Journal Reviewer	6	3	5	3	7	5
Conference Reviewer	5	5	4	4	4	4
Editorial Board	2	2	1	1	1	1
State/National Officer	4	4	6	5	4	4
NCATE Reviewer	2	2	2	2	2	2
Other						
Advisor, Student Organization	3 (CMLA; SPAGE; GAYC)	5	3 (CMLA; SPAGE; GAYC)	3	3 (CMLA; GAYC; ODK)	5

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Books/Chapters

- Bauer, D., Bradley, L.G., & Dillon, L. (2010). Beyond "Written Off": Surviving and thriving through adolescent literacy. In J. DeVitis & L. Irwin-DeVitis (Eds.) *Adolescent Education Reader*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Bradley, L.G. (2009). Unlikely seams. In the *Professional Anthology of the 2009 Invitational Summer Institute*. Central Georgia Writing Project.
- Bradley, L.G. (2009). Stellanuna in adolescent classrooms: owning writing and language. In the *Fall 2009 Personal Anthology*. Central Georgia Writing Project.
- Bradley, L.G. (2008). The who? The how? And the so what? Exploring the transformative work of exemplary writing teachers. In the *Professional Anthology of the 2008 Invitational Summer Institute*. Central Georgia Writing Project.
- Christy, C. (2009) Graphic organizers; Snapshots of meaning for secondary and tertiary learners. *Abstracts of the proceedings of the International Journal of Arts and Sciences Conference*, Toronto, Canada 2009.
- Digiovanni, L. W., Schwartz, S. L., & Greer, C. (2009). iPodcast I learn: Technology in teacher education. In C Maddux (Ed.) *Research highlights in technology and teacher education*. Chesapeake: AACE Press.
- Golson (Bradley), L.C. (2007). Imaginology. In *Educators impacting the world: Invitational Summer Institute Anthology*. Central Georgia Writing Project.
- Gleason, M., Melancon, M., & Kleine, K. L. M. (In press). Using HGP to Teach Critical Literacy *CellBiology Education*. Bethesda, MD: American Society for Cell Biology.
- Kleine, K. L. M. (2009) *Treasure Chest II: Active Learning Strategies, Brain Stretchers, and Community-building Activities*. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.
- Kleine, K. L. M., Gleason, M., & Melancon, M. (2008). Using Critical Literacy to Understand Implications of the Human Genome Project in *Human Genome Project in the College Curriculum: Ethical Issues and Practical Strategies*. Aine Donovan & Ronald Greene (Eds.). Boston, MA: University Press of New England.
- Muschell, L. (2008). *Using Literature to Develop Empathy and Compassion in Pre-Service Teachers*. In M.F. He & J. Phillion (Series Eds.), *Research for social justice: Personal~passionate~participatory inquiry*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Journal Articles

- Christy, C. (2007). Teacher educators owe classroom teachers a debt of gratitude. *ACEI Activist*, Vol. 20, No.1.
- Kleine, K. L. M. & McBryar, L. S. (2009). Preservice teachers experiencing middle grades curriculum. *Middle School Journal*, (40), 4. Westerville, OH, National Middle School Association.
- Shiver, J., Abney, A., & Mizelle, N. B. (2009). "Preparing Middle Grades Mathematics Teachers at Georgia College & State University," *MAA Notes* (Mathematical Association of America).
- Wilcox, V. (2009). Here's the Math (A paper rebutting the argument that teachers don't need to know math in order to teach to a standards-based curriculum) *Puyallup Parent Magazine*, August 2009.
- Wilcox, V. (2008)/ Understanding Zero and Negative Numbers, in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, November 2008.

EXTERNALLY FUNDED FACULTY GRANTS

Bradley, L. Co-authored with Dr. Dan Bauer, who also serves as a co-PI and Project Director, originally funded as a New NWP Site beginning summer of 2007. As one of approximately 200 funded

sites in all fifty states (and in U.S. territories), each year our project invites 15-18 exemplary teachers to participate in an intensive Summer Institute during the month of June. The CGWP is a Longitudinal P-12 Teacher Professional Development Program Designed to Support Effective Writing Instruction. Current funding information is provided below:

- Peer-Reviewed Continued Funding Application for \$46,000 (with a required cash or in-kind match of \$46,000) to continue work of the CGWP in 2009 was awarded March of 2009.
- Peer-Reviewed Continued Funding Application for \$46,000 (with a required cash or in-kind match of \$46,000) was awarded on March 8th of 2010.
- TOTAL CUMULATIVE FEDERAL FUNDING - \$119,000 (Final budgets including matching funds will be approximately \$349,569).

Bradley, L. Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) 2006 to present – Co Chair. Worked with

- Co-Coordinator of the RIF grant with Dr. Rebecca McMullen. Manage the budget and work with a book selection committee to purchase three books for each child in Baldwin County Schools (PK-5 and Early College) on an annual basis. We serve a total of 3,306 students in Baldwin County
- 2007-2008 Federal Funding \$16,023 with a required match of \$4,006
- 2008-2009 Federal Funding \$16,023 with a required match of \$5,341
- 2009-2010 Federal Funding \$16,023 with a required match of \$5,341
- TOTAL CUMULATIVE FUNDING - \$58,257 (Total including matching funds \$75,492)

Bradley, L. Co-authored with Dr. Dan Bauer. Science, Technology, Engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Grant Awarded in December of 2008 to fund a K-16 learning community aimed at improving STEM instruction. Entitled “Writing, Thinking, Doing, Learning, Teaching: Sleuthing and Sharing Authentic Paths to Science and Math Understandings,” this project brings together ten educators from GCSU and Baldwin County Schools, ranging from pre-service middle grades teachers to GCSU faculty to teachers of all grade levels in Baldwin County. Extending the NWP model to STEM applications, this project culminates in a multi-day learning event at Rock Eagle 4H Camp in May for a third grade science class, a seventh grade math class, and their respective teachers and chaperones. A renewal and extension proposal was submitted in April of 2009 and awarded in May of 2009 for the 2009-2010 academic year.

TOTAL FUNDING - \$14,000

Christy, C. USG Reading Consortium Mini Grant (\$4000.00) Spring 2007

Deneroff, V. 2008-2010. K’Necting with Middle Grades Mathematics and Science. Received STEM Grant through State of Georgia Initiative, \$11,500 for professional development of middle school mathematics and science teachers. Conducted Lesson Study which included pre-service teachers as LPP’s.

Kleine, K. STEM Future Teachers Academy 2008-11 (\$77,000 annually); STEM mini-grant to redesign Physical Science course, 2009 (\$7000); Consultant for inquiry in-service training, (2008, \$1000); SENCER/NSF sub-award, (2007, 2009) (\$5000)

Muschell, L. *Students, Families, and Teachers: A Collaborative Approach to Increasing Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Reasoning Abilities.* Approved and funded for \$7000 by STEM Initiative for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Schwartz, S. L. & Wilcox, V. *Magnificent Math Meetings.* Submitted to STEM, funded academic year 2008-2009, \$14000

Wilcox, V. STEM Grant Making Math “Special” (Funded 2009 \$7,000 to work with Special Education teachers at TG Scott Elementary School to diagnose student mathematical misunderstandings)

Wilcox, V. STEM Grant Managing the MCNI (Monroe County Numeracy Initiative (Funded 2008 \$7,000 to work with a team of 3rd grade teachers piloting the initiative for Monroe County Schools)

Evidence of Student Achievement

The data below show student success rates, such as graduation rates, retention, job placement, acceptance to other schools, etc. Whether it is gathered from traditional sources such as the GACE or non-traditional sources like number of presentations, the data below indicate that graduates of the Georgia College Early Childhood and Middle Grades programs are well-prepared to be highly effective teachers and *Architects of Change*.

Student Learning

Students are assessed in their capstone projects/senior year through a portfolio system, common rubrics, and use of LiveText. Results of assessments indicate high achievement by Early Childhood and Middle Grades Students.

Summary of Undergraduate Student Exit Portfolio Results, 2008-2010

	2008			2009			2010		
Evaluation	EC (n=63)	MG (n=13)	Total (n=73)	EC (n=38)	MG (n=17)	Total (n=55)	EC (n=40)	MG (n=20)	Total (n=60)
Passed with Honors	6	5	11	8	1	9	11	10	21
Passed with Distinction	19	4	23	9	3	12	11	6	17
Passed with Recognition	29	2	31	18	9	27	12	2	14
Passed	9	2	11	2	4	6	6	2	8
Did not Pass	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

On their Exit Portfolio Presentations, of the 37 Early Childhood teacher candidates:

- 8 Passed with Honors
- 9 Passed with Distinction
- 18 Passed with Recognition
- 2 Passed
- One candidate failed to successfully complete Capstone and is repeating it this summer. She tentatively will present her portfolio at the end of summer.

Of the 17 Middle Grades teacher candidates

- 1 Passed with Honors
- 3 Passed with Distinction
- 9 Passed with Recognition
- 4 Passed

GCSU GACE Longitudinal Data 2006-2010

Program	06-07	06-07	06-07	07-08	07-08	07-08	08-09	08-09	08-09	09-10	09-10	09-10
	Total	Passed	Rate	Total	Passed	Rate	Total	Passed	Rate	Total	Passed	Rate
Early Childhood	50	50	100%	63	62	98%	38	38	100%	40	39	98%
Middle Grades	18	18	100%	13	12.5*	96%	17	15**	94%	20	19.5	98%
Totals	68	68	100%	76	74.5	98%	55	53	96%	60	58.5	98%

* One student has passed one content GACE; all others both content GACE tests

** One student elected not to be a completer; 14 passed both tests; 2 passed one test

Job Placement Rates

Statistics compiled by the University System of Georgia, Georgia Department of Education, and the John H. Lounsbury College of Education, indicate that on average 93% of our Early Childhood and Middle School candidates are employed as teachers in Georgia's public schools the year they graduate. Some elect to teach in other states; others go directly into graduate school and delay teaching for a year; and a few choose to redirect their careers into related fields such as mission work or seminary training.

Student Engagement and Accomplishments: 2008-2010

Our undergraduate student successes are also seen in our seniors and represented in their scholarship, leadership in school and state organizations, and research presented at regional, state, and national conferences. The accomplishments of recent graduates in Early Childhood and Middle Grades education are summarized in the following table:

Summary of Undergraduate Student Achievements, 2008-2010

	2008			2009			2010		
Activity	EC (n=63)	MG (n=13)	Total (n=73)	EC (n=38)	MG (n=17)	Total (n=55)	EC (n=40)	MG (n=20)	Total (n=60)
Presentations at regional, state, or national conferences	20	16	36	35	9	44	40	21	61
Number of students participating in presentations							40	19	59

Offices held in student organizations	4	7	11	5	11	16	5	9	14
Students participating in study abroad	6	1	7	3	5	8	5	5	10
Students inducted in honor societies	20	7	27	9	4	11	0	1	1
Student awards other than COE	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	1	3
Students with Honor's Project	1	4	5	1	2	3	0	4	4

Graduate Student Achievements: 2008-2009

	Early Childhood	Middle Grades	Total
Total Presentations at regional, state or national conferences	2	2	4
Publications	6	1	7
Grant Participation	4	0	4

Student Publications

Publications

Beck, K. (2009). The role of the teacher in moving students below grade level to grade level. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 27-41.

Blackwell, S. T. (2009). Relationship between teacher morale and school climate. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 43-53.

Chesnut, A. (2009). Increasing the literacy of unmotivated young adolescent African American males. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 63-84.

Cicalese, J. (2009). The implications of writers' workshop in fifth grade. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 85-112.

Hall, D, S. T. (2009). ActivBoard Instruction: Does it increase reading skills? *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 139-152.

James, D. (2009). Differentiated instruction: One school's survey analysis. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 165-186.

Johnson, A. (2009). An action research study of the influence of cultural and cognitive characteristics on students' mathematics abilities. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 187-206.

Miller, M. (2009). The effectiveness of using "read alouds" in teaching reading. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 207-216.

Snooks, B. C. (2009). Building relationships with middle school students. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 229-248.

Taylor, D. D. (2009). The effectiveness of teaching math using manipulatives in the fourth grade at Southwest Laurens Elementary. *The Corinthian: The journal of student research at GCSU*, 10, 240-269.

Student Presentations

Albright, L., & Allen, K. (October, 2009). *Integrating Literature Across the Curriculum*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Alexander, C., Kearns, B. J., & Lemaster, K. (October, 2009). *Walking in Your Students Shoes: Children Learning New Concepts*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Allgood, C., Arthur, S., & Grantham, A. (October, 2009). *Two Fish, Three Fish, Four...Reading Can Lead You to Mathematics Front Door*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Bailey, M. (2010). *Local to Global: Middle Grades Education Beyond the Classroom*. Presented at the Honors Beyond the Classroom State Conference.

Bales, S., McCone, L., & Smith, L. (October, 2009). *Integrating Bloom's Taxonomy into the Classroom*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Barber, K., Ferguson, L., & Wyatt, J. (October, 2009). *It's Not How You Are, It's How You Are Smart*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Barfield, J., Keener, A., & Smith, B. (2010). *Improving Literacy through Content Area Reading*. Presented at the Georgia Reading Association Conference.

Bearchell, L., Gebhart, A., & Smith, S. (October, 2009). *Beyond the Answer: The Importance of the Process*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Bozett, T., Holder, S., & Roberts, C. (October, 2009). *Litamatics: What is it?!?!?!.* Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Buchanan, S. & Wells, S. (October, 2009). *Implementing Creative Writing and Its Process*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Button, C. (2010). *Literacy across the Curriculum*, Presented at the Georgia Reading Association Conference.

Carpenter, A., & Walsh, K., & Sidwell, K. (October, 2009). *Exploring Creativity through Learning Centers*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Clark, C. M., & Moore, R. (2010). *Leadership Opportunities through CMLA*. Presented at the Southeastern Regional POMLE Conference, Boone: NC.

Cooper, H. S. (2010). *Literacy across the Curriculum*, Presented at the Georgia Reading Association Conference.

Del.Bosque, N., & Hires, L. (October, 2009). *Critical Literacy: Crucial to the Classroom*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Falkenberg, A., Hembree, M., & Sturtevant, W. (2010). *Embracing Young Adolescent Culture and Individuality through Literacy Activities*. Presented at the Georgia Reading Association Conference

Garrett, K., & Patterson, C. (2010). *Fostering Family and Community Involvement to Support Literacy in the Lives of Young Adolescents*. Presented at the Fifth Annual International Conference on Civic Education.

Grant, M., Harrington, S., & Ragusa, R. (October, 2009). *Importance of Integrating Multiculturalism in the Classroom through the Arts*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Harkins, K., Kitchens, M., & Robinson, R. W. (October, 2009). *Effectively Incorporating Play into the Elementary Classroom*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Hillard, K., Loudermilk, A., & Pohl, K. (October, 2009). *Let Children's Literature Open Doors to Worlds Outside of Reading: Using Children's Literature Across the Curriculum*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Jones, J., & Moore, R. (2010). *Reaching Higher Levels of Achievement through Assessment*. Presented at The Power of a Teacher, PAGE Annual Conference.

Lemons, M., & Leone, S. (October, 2009). *Let's Play*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Manahan, R., & Worley, S. (October, 2009). *Teaching Phonemic Awareness through Movement*. Presented at the Annual GAYC Conference, Atlanta: GA.

Matricardi, C., Reese, M. V., & Seals, M. (2010). *A Group of Brains Is Better than One!* Presented at the Sixth Annual International Conference on Supplemental Education.

Pierce, S. R., & Thurber, M. (2010). *Local to Global: Middle Grades Education Beyond the Classroom*. Presented at the Honors Beyond the Classroom State Conference.

Pierce, S. R. (2010). *The Role of Gender and Learning Modality in Mathematical Problem Solving (Scholars Research Study)*. Presented at the Honors Beyond the Classroom State Conference.

Student Honors, Awards, and Outstanding Accomplishments

In fall 2006 the GCSU CMLA chapter was selected to serve as the National Host site for CMLA for 2007-2009, meaning that Georgia College students served as the National CMLA officers for 2007-2009, planned the National CMLA conferences for those years and worked with the National Middle School Association to facilitate CMLA activities at the annual NMSA conferences during 2007-2009.

In 2010 Ms. Christy Clark, a graduate of the Middle Grades program also earned her Leadership endorsement, only the second GCSU graduate to do so.

From the 2008-2010 Early Childhood and Middle Grades cohorts, 10 students traveled to England, Belize, and Australia for International Education experiences.

Students Recognized as Teachers of the Year

Over the last four years just in Middle Georgia, 26 teachers recognized as Teachers of the Year for their School and 8 selected as Teachers of the Year for the District were graduates of a GCSU Early Childhood and Middle Grades Department program and, in some cases, multiple programs.

County/District Level Teachers of the Year

2010

Gina Clark was named Peach County Teacher of the Year.

Vicki Thigpen received the teacher of the year award for 2009/2010 Jones County.

2009

Chuck Claxton was named Baldwin County Teacher of the Year for 2008-2009. This is the second time he has been named system-wide teacher of the Year. He was named Teacher of the Year at Boddie Middle School and at Putnam County Middle School, and in 1997 was named Baldwin County Teacher of the Year.

2008

Joan Martiny was honored with the 2008 Teacher of the Year Award from Baldwin County. In addition to this award, Mrs. Martiny has received the Carver Elementary School Teacher of the Year (1984), the Davis Elementary Teacher of the Year (1989), the Baldwin County Teacher of the Year (1989), and the Baldwin County Cluster Teacher of the Year Award (2007).

Patty Wells was selected as the 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year from Jones County.

2007

Dr. Rita Thomas was selected Teacher of the Year for Putnam County, 2006-2007.

Amanda Tarpley Yarbrough received Laurens County's "Exceptional Children's Professional Excellence Award" for 2007. Out of the nine schools within the district, Amanda was voted the top SPED teacher.

Nicole Chambers Brewer was awarded the Houston County Teacher of the year Award (2007).

School-level Teacher of the Year

2010

Charlandria Glover was awarded the 2009/2010 Teacher of the Year award at Hunt Elementary School in Peach County.

Jennifer Phillips was the 2009/2010 recipient of the Teacher of the Year award at Byron Middle School in Peach County.

Shelley Dunlap received the Teacher of the Year award for 2009/2010 from Wells Primary School.

Ann Whipple Taylor earned the 2009/2010 Teacher of the Year award from Gray Station Middle School in Jones County.

Methina Underwood Chambers was presented the 2009/2010 Teacher of the Year award for Mattie Wells Elementary School in Jones County.

Vicki Thigpen received the Teacher of the Year award for 2009/2010 from Clifton Ridge Middle School in Jones County.

Robin Swetman was awarded Teacher of the Year for 2009/2010 for her outstanding approach to teaching at Woodland Elementary School.

Amy Lundy was awarded recognition as the 2010 Teacher of the Year for her commitment to teaching at Gray Station Middle School

Carmen Shepard received recognition as the 2010 Teacher of the Year for her work as a 3rd and 4th grade teacher of technology at Gray Elementary School in Jones County.

Paula Wright has received recognition as a 2010 Teacher of the Year for her work as a 6th and 8th grade teacher of Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies at Clifton Ridge Middle School in Jones County.

Debbie Howe was acknowledged as a 2010 Teacher of the Year.

Nikki Hawes was a 2010 Teacher of the Year for at Wells Primary School in Jones County.

2009

Carol Melder Blandy Hills Elementary School as Teacher of the Year. (2009)

Miranda Janelle Ellison selected as he 2009 Teacher of the Year for Eagle Ridge Elementary School.

Cheryl Johnson, has been selected as the 2009 Early Learning Center Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Johnson taught in the kindergarten program at Children's Friend for 11 years and also was served as an assistant director. She was named one of the top 10 childcare professionals in the nation. She was the first certified teacher hired by the Baldwin County Head Start program in 1994. She has served as a liaison between Baldwin County Schools and Georgia College to develop and maintain relationships with professional development schools. She has been a mentor teacher at the Early Learning Center with the Georgia Pre-K program for 14 years and is currently a facilitator for the New Teacher Institute. She is a host teacher to Georgia College cohorts and students from Central Georgia Technical College and is also a member of the Early Learning Center Leadership Team.

Chuck Claxton, has been recognized as the 2009 Oak Hill Middle School Teacher of the Year. Mr. Claxton started teaching at Boddie Middle School in 1994 then moved to Oak Hill Middle. After briefly leaving the system for a stint in Putnam County, Claxton returned to Oak Hill in 2006 to teach life

science in the ACE program. Since he started teaching, he has earned the title of Teacher of the Year at Boddie Middle and Putnam Middle. He was named Baldwin County's Teacher of the Year in 1997.

Lisa Mosely was named Teacher of the Year 2008-2009 at David A Perdue Elementary School in Houston County.

2008

Jan Thompson received the Blandy Hills Teacher of the Year Award for 2008.

Melanie Cobb won the Outstanding Teacher of the Year 2008 for The Early Learning Center.

2007

Dana Hutchinson was nominated and selected as 2007 Teacher of the Year from Califf Middle School/Gray Station Middle School in Jones County. She teaches Family and Consumer Sciences, Reading and Social Studies and Math. She earned her B.S. in idle Grades Education (1999) and M.Ed.in Educational Leadership (2006) from Georgia College.

June Lassitter was awarded the 2007 Teacher of the Year from Wells Primary in Jones County.

Lucinda Simpson was named Dames Ferry Elementary 2007 Teacher of the Year in Jones Country.

Bethany Stevens earned the 2007 Teacher of the Year Award from Mattie Wells Elementary in Jones County.

Patty Q. Wells was named Clifton Ridge 2007 Teacher of the Year in Jones County.

Pam Brookins was chosen Teacher of the Year for Creekside for 2007.

Examples of Reflective Practice to Improve Teaching and Student Learning

Example 1. Teacher Work Sample Revision: The following in as example of a revision that was made in our programs to a common assessment, the Teacher Work Sample, that is designed to teach students the Unit creation process. Students are guided through the importance of understanding their students, building background knowledge, determining learning goals, planning curriculum that represents best practices including pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment, and reflecting on the entire process. The Teacher Work Sample is divided into manageable chunks, and spread across multiple courses so that the integration inherent is obvious to students.

Getting to Know Your Students and the Curriculum

To learn more about the students in your classroom and their families, complete the following:

- **Getting to Know You – Student Interview** – Conduct an interview with a diverse group of students from your classroom. Be sure to include at least 4 students. In order to put students at ease, be as informal as possible. Choose a location that is comfortable for open conversations (media center, playground, lunchroom, etc.). Be sure to reassure students that this is not a graded activity.
- **Getting to Know Your Child – Parent Questionnaire** – After gaining permission from your host teacher, send a questionnaire home with each student in your class. This questionnaire should be designed to elicit information concerning students' interests, strengths, talents, learning needs, etc.

- **Getting to Know Your Students – Whole Group Activity** – Implement at least one whole group activity that will give you insight into your students' interests, strengths, talents, learning needs, etc. Create an organizer to convey the information gained from the activity. Be sure to specifically address outliers as well as commonalities.
- **Getting to Know Your Class – Observation** – Using the “notetaking” format used in Developmental Learning, record observations of your students and their interactions in the classroom, at play, at lunch, on the playground, during “specials,” etc. Pay close attention to choices student make related to materials, time, activities, books, music, sports, etc.
- **Getting to Know the Curriculum – Host Teacher Interview and Curriculum Exploration** – Conduct an informal interview with your host teacher to explore the content and skills that are necessary to support student learning. Be sure to address topics/themes that may be appropriate to develop through your integrated unit. In addition, examine the GPS for your grade level as well as any school wide curriculum maps/guides.

After completing the experiences above, reflect upon the information which you have gained about your students and their families. Respond to the following questions providing specific evidence from your data:

- What did you learn about your class in general through these experiences?
- How can you use this data to inform your choice of unit topic/theme?
- How can you use this information to guide you in the planning process?

***For this section, turn in the following:** documentation of student interviews, completed set of parent questionnaires, documentation of group activity, “notetaking” observations, documentation of host teacher interview and curriculum exploration, and the responses to the final questions (2 pages)*

Example 2: Inclusion of alternate assessments that are action based and include technology in meaningful ways

In an effort to increase digital literacy, help our students think of 21st century ways of communicating with others, and also advocate for professional standards of practice, blogging has been introduced in several of our undergraduate and graduate courses. Below is an example of one blog utilized in our undergraduate program. This piece of evidence helps to show a commitment to innovative pedagogy, collaboration, reshaping curricula to better meet needs of students, and out of class learning.

SERVICE LEARNING - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STYLE

HELPING TEACHERS INTEGRATE SERVICE LEARNING INTO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2010

Water For the Thirsty

Anna Loudermilk, Samantha Worley, B.J. Kearns, Michelle Kitchens, Elizabeth Lunsford, and Carley Wethern



SERVICE LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Service Learning has become an important way of community building. Many service-learning projects that we have heard about are often with older students, yet elementary age students are capable of meaningful service learning, too. This blog has been developed initially for students completing their final internship in the Early Childhood Education Cohort at Georgia College & State University to chronicle the projects that their elementary age students participate in. As



“Children are the hands by which we take hold of heaven.”
~Henry Ward Beecher

<http://eecserservicelearning.blogspot.com>

Example 3: Digital Literacy component

This is an example of student work created as part of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Project that caused revision of three of the Early Childhood Education courses to better integrate skills learned in the Educational Technology courses that students were taking. Students learned to create handouts about pedagogical strategies they were doing (in this case, a play center) and podcast them, in addition to videos and other work suitable for podcasting. The intent of this project was to increase digital literacy with our students as well as encourage them to experiment with technology in their field placements, in turn increasing digital literacy of P-5 students. This evidence is included to show innovative teaching, purposeful integration across disciplines, collaboration between faculty members, and scholarship that influenced publications, presentations, and course design.



Standards Addressed

ELA4RI: The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. It identifies and analyzes the elements of plot, character, and setting in stories read, written, viewed, or performed.

Developmental Level Addressed

Cognitive: This activity promotes critical thinking because it requires the students to use their knowledge about plot, character, and setting to create their performance.

Physical: This activity requires students to move up and about freely. Students used both gross and fine motor skills during this play center.

Social: This play center was a great opportunity for the students to interact socially. They used their social skills to work together to create and perform their play.

Emotional: This activity allowed the students to express themselves emotionally. The students used facial and vocal expressions when they acted.

Dramatic Play Center

Description of the Activity

This play center allows for students to grasp a better understanding of the plot, setting, and characters in a story. After reviewing the plot, settings, and characters from a story that the class has heard or read as a whole and how to recognize each aspect in a story, introduce the play center to the students and encourage them to create a play of their own. Make sure to tell them to be conscious of the different elements of a story or play such as the plot, setting, and character. After they have practiced and presented their play(s), have them identify the plot, setting, and characters in their play to be sure that they understood the concept.

Suggested Materials

Props that support creativity such as:
Dress-Up Clothes and Accessories
Every-day Household Materials

We suggest that you allow at least 4-6 students participate in this play center in order for it to be more effective.

