

Mentoring Summary 2010-11

HAZLET

Hazlet Director of Curriculum Jill Takacs and Monmouth University Mentoring Coordinator Linda Foster collaborated on a series of workshops for Hazlet faculty members and administrators. The sessions focused on the needs of first year teachers and the contributions of teacher leaders and were very well attended with over 30 staff members on average.

Mentoring sessions for teacher leaders focused on teachers as educational leaders and explored the role of teacher leaders in mentoring student teachers and early field candidates, facilitating parental workshops and seminars for novice teachers, participating in school-based professional learning communities, serving on committees such as the Professional Academy Board and Intervention and Referral Committee, and presenting Master Teacher Innovation Labs. The teacher leaders analyzed research on leadership, reviewed National Board Certification, and discussed personalized professional development projects including action research, peer coaching, and book studies.

Teacher leaders have presented sessions to their colleagues on collaborative teaching and classroom environment. Teacher leaders explored ideas for future projects at a culminating meeting in May.

First year teacher support sessions included seminars on collaborative teaching, in-class support, integration of technology, and classroom environment. The sessions were facilitated by teacher leaders.

KEYPORT

During the 2010-2011 school year, Mentoring Coordinator Linda Foster presented a series of workshops for teachers in the Keyport School District on backward design unit planning in sessions at Central Elementary School and Keyport High School. The content of the seminars was based on the work of Wiggins and McTighe and explored understanding versus knowing and both the how and why of planning with the end in mind. Subsequently, Monmouth University professors provided feedback to unit plans designed by members of the Keyport staff.

The first workshop of the 2011-2012 school year was held on September 14 and focused on classroom environment. The content of the seminar was based on the work of Jane Bluestein (2010), Dennis McInerney (2005), Alfie Kohn (1994, 2001) and Carol S. Dweck (2007). The dialogue addressed current practice and results, both positive and negative, the importance of teaching positive behavior before addressing content, possible universal dispositions it is hoped students will internalize, the power of emotion and expectation, the necessity of relevance, and the responsibility of the teacher in creating a positive learning environment in which students feel they can be successful. The next session will focus on motivation theory and the component characteristics of successful classroom motivators.

MONMOUTH REGIONAL

Linda Foster met with the district mentors of Monmouth University student teachers and early field candidates. The content of the seminar was based on the NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel Report on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning and stressed the necessity of integrating clinical preparation through every facet of teacher education and the importance of an interactive professional community in providing teacher candidates with guided practice in real-life situations.

MIDDLETOWN

Due to the high number of early field and student teaching placements in this district, an attempt was made to arrange ongoing support sessions for mentor teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels. The teacher response was very limited, perhaps, due to the physical distance between placement locations or the uncertainties of a negotiation year. To facilitate our ability to provide support in the coming year, we are working with school leaders to place cohorts of student within selected buildings.

TINTON FALLS

Joe Corriero and Linda Foster met with the central administrators and building principals in July to present an overview of professional learning communities and assist in the development of a district plan for implementing PLCs to support professional development in each building in the district. Joe and Linda presented to the faculty at the initial staff meeting prior to the start of school in the fall. District coordinator Linda Balogh, who was recently named principal of the middle school, felt the program was successful this year and would continue to develop. The majority of PLCs focused on book study by faculty choice. This was considered by the district to be a good entry point. One group focused on technology, which proved beneficial to other groups. The district built in a few “late start” days for students to provide time for the PLCs to meet more often.