St. John Fisher’s School of Education partners with Arcadia Middle School, Greece, New York, to prepare a new generation of middle level teachers.
Presentation for the
New York State Middle School Association
(NYMSMA) annual conference
Syracuse, NY

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Goals

Few teacher candidates enter Schools of Education identifying themselves as middle school teachers. But what’s not to love about middle school teaching?

This session will:

- Highlight what a Middle Level Extension can do to prepare “Adolescence Education Majors” for the middle grades.

- Explore preliminary results of a partnership in which a methods course is taught on-site in a middle school
First Days “in the Field”

Assistant Principal Richardson welcomes the group.

“So this is a fire drill?”

“The thing you have to realize, being where you are in your development [as a teacher], is that you are going to mess up, and it’s OK. That’s how you learn and that’s why you’re here.”
Integrating Middle School Methods with the Block I Field Placement

- EDUC 338-Middle School C.I.A.
- Class splits into 2 groups
  - A goes to their field placement classrooms
  - B stays for small group instruction
  - A & B reverse
  - Small group instruction focuses on application of course content in classroom settings
- Students return for additional observation hours throughout the school week
EDUC 338: Middle School Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

<table>
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# EDUC 338: Middle School Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

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No matter what subject they are being prepared to teach, every middle grade teacher is primarily a teacher of literacy; a teacher of thinking, social, and learning skills.

Kellough & Kellough, 2008
Middle School Philosophy

Principal D’Angelo takes questions on the total school curriculum.
"Your students should be working harder than you."

Meleca-Voigt on constructivist strategies

"Constructivist practices like understanding and building on student perceptions can help students become more involved and thus more interested in the topics. Students who are interested usually perform better."

Fisher Teacher Candidate’s reflection

Jo Meleca-Voigt, Spanish Teacher
“The key to great teaching is teaming---working together to recognize what works and what doesn’t work for our students.”

Delaina Grasso-Infantino & Debbie Nally, Special Education and Social Studies Teachers, Team 7H
“A team... enables students to feel safe, and being safe, psychologically and physically, helps students learn. Knowing your teachers well... and having them know you... builds a sense of responsibility, community, and social justice.”

Fisher Teacher Candidate’s reflection
### How Teams Address the Issue:
- Develop common goals
- Agree on systematic approaches to student success
- Identify strengths each person brings to the team
- Become a cohesive unit
- Develop a student-centered environment
- Understand the development, social and cultural differences among students
- Become part of the students’ lives; find out as much as possible about students which should include parent participation

### Affects on Young Adolescents:
- Shared responsibility allows more time and capacity to address students’ needs
- Team unity displays the importance of working with others
- When relationships are genuine, students will do whatever is expected of them and are most willing to please
- Maximizing students’ independence to learn from their own experiences allows them to assume part of the responsibility for their learning
- Promoting risks will motivate students to tackle intellectual challenges throughout their lives

### Building Team Identity & Personal Relationships with Students

### Examples of Addressing the Issue:
- Establish standard classroom procedures that develop consistency
- Set time aside for team planning periods
- Reconsider, renegotiate and revise core beliefs when needed
- Share the load and responsibility
- Make time for team activities that lead to trust and respect
- Give every student what he or she needs to achieve
- Relationship-building activities, i.e. Interest inventories
- Promote risk taking
- Create a “school within a school” environment where students and teachers develop loyalty to the team

### Non-examples:
- Not participating in team activities
- Ignoring constructive criticism from fellow colleagues
- Going against a team procedure/rule
- Unclear expectations
- Failing to meet the needs of a student
- Not showing interest for students’ interest that extend beyond the classroom

EDUC 338, Reflection 1 Part B
Learning through Field Experience in Block I: The Arcadia *Gradual Immersion* Model

- **Gradual immersion**
  1. Guided observations
  2. Assisting students during independent work
  3. Modeling the teacher’s warm up, anticipatory set, or closure
  4. Assisting small groups set up by the teacher
  5. Implementing one of the teacher’s lesson activities

- **Teaching a lesson**
Class work sample: Page 1 of 2.
What happens during the beginning, middle, and end of lessons?

### Observation Forms

**Teacher:**

**Subject:** French

**Date:** 9/15/08

#### Presenting Instruction

**Beginning the Lesson**

- Gain attention
  - bell to signify the start of class
  - welcome everyone
- State objective
  - had PP on the board already illustrating that we would focus on learning numbers
- Establish purpose of the lesson
  - important to count, tell others today: you address and phone number, pg. numbers, tell time

#### Middle of the Lesson

- Input: Demonstrates the ability to present the content through a variety of instructional strategies such as lecture, discussion, group work, etc.; demonstrates the ability to sequence the content logically.
  - demonstrated the numbers by saying them then have students repeat
  - showed PowerPoint
  - have students go around room counting in order out loud
  - hand activity in pairs
- Modeling: Demonstrates the ability to model classroom behaviors, for example, using technically correct written and oral language, courtesy, listening skills, and acceptance.
  - modeled classroom behaviour and listening skills when she rang the bell to silence the students in pairs
  - accepted that some students learned slower than others kept repeating the numbers for the class
- Guided Practice: Demonstrates the ability to break down learning into manageable steps by providing examples, demonstrations, and guided practice to ensure student understanding.
  - slowly went over numbers 1-10 by introducing 1-5 first, then 6-10
  - showed examples of #23 3 pencils
  - many conversations and practice between partners
- Checking for Understanding: Demonstrates the ability to monitor student understanding by seeking a variety of responses from varied students.
  - when partners went over their numbers with each other, she walked around the room to monitor them and helped a pair if she overheard them pronouncing a number wrong
  - she would call on a variety of students throughout the PowerPoint
Assisting Students during Independent Work
Doing the Anticipatory Set
Working with Small Groups
Learning to Plan and Implement Part of a Lesson
Why Curriculum Maps and Pacing Guides Benefit New Teachers

As a new teacher, it is very doubtful that one will know exactly what to do at all times. That is why it is important to use all the resources that are available to you. Curriculum maps and pacing guides are two that many districts provide to their teachers to help them succeed.

- Organizes information of an entire year in a visual timeline
- Allows the teacher to see their end goal
  - Ex: State examination
- No questions of their responsibilities or expectations

- Keeps teacher focused on a smaller scale
- Helps figure out what to teach and how to teach it
- Keeps teacher on same page as others in their grade
  - No disservice to the students
Teaching a Whole Class Lesson
Experiencing the Philosophy and Mission of the School

Spirit Week at Arcadia
Gaining Entrance: How to get Teacher Buy-In

- Write an Articulation Agreement to clearly define roles and responsibilities of all involved
- Host meetings between college faculty and administrators/teachers *before* school begins
- Build on teachers’ commitment to prepare future teachers—Embrace their excitement! Reward it!
- Promote the on-site class as a structure that will allow for collaboration between teachers and college faculty
- Plan for teachers and administrators to actively participate in the class as co-teachers
- Keep the work load at the minimum, not a burden to teachers.
The Role of School Administrators

- Pre-planning well before the partnership begins
- Developing and sharing the gradual immersion Field Experience Model with Arcadia teachers
- Frequent and on-going contact with college professor and regular visits to the on-site class
- Inclusion of college teacher candidates in school events
- Trouble shooting
- Modeling a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice
Housekeeping Issues

- Security and check in
- Room space
- Technology
- Teacher Schedules
Benefits of an On-Site Methods Course for Arcadia

- Professional development—opportunities for teachers to showcase skills and knowledge
- Additional “hands” for struggling middle level students
- College role models for students
- Potential for additional classroom resources through college teacher candidates’ research and projects
- Advancing equity for future middle school students through the preparation of “developmentally responsive” future teachers
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<th>Impact of the Middle School Extension on Adolescence Majors</th>
<th>Benefits of the On-Site Partnership for Fisher Students</th>
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<td>Clear understanding of developmental differences and their impact on learning</td>
<td>Greater comfort level in classrooms earlier in the semester</td>
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<td>Focus on instructional strategies appropriate for the age level</td>
<td>Ability to observe, label, and reflect on teaching episodes with greater detail</td>
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<td>Focus on standards, frameworks, and benchmark assessments specifically for the middle grades</td>
<td>Opportunities to learn from teaching small chunks before moving to a whole lesson</td>
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<td>Overview of the total middle school curriculum</td>
<td>Planning grounded in actual grade level curriculum</td>
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<td>Movement from single subject focus to integration of literacy strategies and cross-curricular connections</td>
<td>Supportive, integrated feedback</td>
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| Stronger connections between theory and practice: What works in classrooms | }
Small Steps toward our Goal

“I never wanted to be a middle school teacher. I’ve always wanted to teach 11th grade because I love the curriculum at that grade. But now—now I am so excited about teaching 6th grade!”

Fisher Teacher Candidate

Oct. 2, 2008
Thanks to the entire *Arcadia Middle School* Faculty with special thanks to:

Alyson Beam  MaryAnn Bachman
Amy Milton  Zach Keller
June Singleton  Karen Schindler
Jo Meleca-Voigt  Clay Sobko
Jarinda Mendez  Deb Nally
Val Snelgrove  Delaina Grasso-Infantino
Karyn Pera  Barb Morreale
Jim Carpenter  Gloria Santoli
Stefanie Gallina  Karyn Harris
Debi Eggert  Colleen Coleman

Karen D’Angelo, Principal  David Richardson, Asst. Principal
Additional Thanks to:

- The Barker Road Middle School Administrators and Faculty, Pittsford, NY
- Bay Trail Middle School Administrators and Faculty, Penfield, NY
- Administrators and Faculty from Rochester City Schools: Dr. Freddie Thomas, Franklin International School of Finance, Wilson Foundation Academy
- St. John Fisher Adolescence Program Faculty, Literacy Faculty, Office of Field Experience, and the School of Arts & Sciences