

CENTER CONNECTIONS

An E-Letter from ACI's Center for Success in High Need Schools

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Best Practices: Preparing Talented Teachers for High-Need Schools

How do we recruit, prepare, and retain the most talented men and women to teach our neediest children? The opportunity to discuss this challenging question attracted more than 75 teacher educators, school personnel, and business and community partners to the inaugural education forum of ACI's *Center for Success in High-Need Schools* (ACI-CFS) on Thursday, April 14, at the Union League Club of Chicago. Schedule immediately before ACI's 53rd Annual Meeting, *Making the Grade: High Expectations for High-Need Schools*, the forum was moderated by Terry Mazany, president and CEO of the Chicago Community Trust, who described the critical needs in high-need schools and praised ACI for establishing the *Center for Success in High-Need Schools*.

The Associated Colleges of Illinois has been doing important work to span... its member colleges and mobilize action to address critical social needs – needs that require responses well beyond the scope and resources of any single institution. I admire the bold vision of the *Center for Success in High-Need Schools*...[as]... an example...for what it will take to deliver on the promise of equal opportunity that forms the bedrock of the American dream.

The Chicago Public Schools...is facing a structural budget deficit that creates a \$150 to \$200 million budget hole each year that must be patched even before the system can think about improving the quality of teaching and learning. We must have a response of similar magnitude to the problem. That is why ACI is so important. Individually, any of the ACI members would make virtually no difference – even if you were producing the premier teachers in the universe. Collectively, you can secure the attention of the school system, organize a strategy of systematic supports for your graduates, and structure placements, so that not only do your graduates instantly elevate the quality of instruction occurring in their classrooms, but they form a collective force to transform the outcomes of an entire school.

We share responsibility to partner with the school system, work together to establish and deliver on standards of teaching worthy of the demands of our high-needs schools, and co-construct the pathways of professional preparation that produce sufficient numbers of outstanding candidates to meet the needs of the system. Finally, we share responsibility to ensure that these teachers...are supported in their novice years so that they can absorb the lessons to be learned through hard experience and still retain their passion to prolong their stay in our schools where there is so much to be done.

Forum panelists included: Leslie Baldacci, CPS teacher and author of *Inside Mrs. B's Classroom*; John Gambro, dean of education at University of St. Francis; CPS administrator Toni Hill, and North Central College professors Mary Jean Lynch and John Zenchak. Baldacci spoke of the rigors of high need school teaching and teacher's need for support. Hill described recent CPS innovations to support teacher professional development. Gambro called for closer

partnerships between K-12 and higher education. Lynch and Zenchak discussed the key roles of arts and sciences faculty members in preparing teachers able to integrate strong subject area knowledge and effective teaching methods.

Transition to Teaching and I-SPED Meetings on April 14

Are you interested in launching a Transition to Teaching or I-SPED partnership? On April 14, 2005, representatives of ACI member colleges and universities joined current *TTT* and *I-SPED* partners to discuss opportunities to launch new partnerships. Support is available from ACI's FIPSE grant to establish up to five more *I-SPED* partnerships, which require that participating ACI members "import" an approved model for delivering accelerated special education certification to college-educated adults. St. Xavier University, *I-SPED*'s lead institution, is administering the first partnership, which acts as a demonstration project for the program. Opportunities for *TTT* partnerships are almost limitless, so long as they conform to basic guidelines: preparing career-changing adults to teach academic content areas in high-need schools, using an "earn while you learn" model that places candidates as interns in high-need classrooms while they complete their studies. For additional information about launching a *TTT* or *I-SPED* partnership, contact centerconnections@acifund.org.

TQE Implementation Team Meeting Focuses on Collaboration with Arts and Sciences Faculty

Faculty members representing disciplines including math, history, business, and English participated in the TQE implementation team meeting on April 1st. *ACI-CFS* staff explained the history and mission of ACI and *ACI-CFS*; Sue Rasher, of OER Associates, shared highlights from the first performance report just submitted to the USDOE; and program directors from each campus shared project updates. Participants discussed the characteristics that facilitate collaboration among faculty at ACI institutions. These include: a focus on action research, a passion for education at all levels, and pedagogical awareness. The group requested *ACI-CFS* programming designed to stimulate conversation and collaboration among faculty from various disciplines. A committee was appointed to continue the conversation and bring suggestions for future action to the team. The committee includes: Andrea Brown, Concordia; Jennifer Jackson, North Central; Dawn Abt-Perkins, Lake Forest; and Julie Tonsing-Meyer, McKendree.

ACI-CFS Submits Teacher Quality Enhancement-Recruitment (TQE-R) Grant Proposal to US Department of Education

ACI-CFS' new TQE-R proposal seeks support to recruit diverse candidates to pursue teaching careers in high need schools. ACI's *TTT*, FIPSE and TQE grants have supported development of accelerated and alternative certification programs, and *Curriculum Transformation Initiatives* that redesign curricula specifically to serve high-need schools. Now, the TQE-R proposal seeks USDOE support to fund recruitment of a diverse population willing to seek careers in teaching in high-need schools. Target audiences are youth and college-educated adults – primarily men and minorities – as well as paraprofessionals already at work in high-need schools. These candidates would be recruited through high school-based future teacher activities, community college articulation agreements, recruitment partnerships with high-need schools, and community outreach efforts. The grant also would provide for support services for candidates and induction services for new teachers. If the proposal is funded, *ACI-CFS*, ACI members, high-need schools, and community colleges will collaborate to implement the implementation.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Inner City Practicum 2005

Inner-City Practicum's 30 interns attended their first orientation session on Saturday, April 16, 2005 at North Central College, participating in workshops and presentations on behavior management, classroom team-building, and the practicum experience and expectations. Dr. Candace Baker of St. Xavier University led interns in a workshop addressing *Positive Behavior Support*, and Anne Deeter led a series of hands-on activities designed to build cooperation and problem-solving skills in the classroom. Each intern received a copy of Harry Wong's best-selling book, *The First Days of School*. Using Wong's text as a resource, they will develop a PBS matrix to share at the next session. Interns are also developing a science project plan related to this summer's interdisciplinary theme, "Solar Safari." The projects will be shared at the next meeting, May 20-21, at North Central. The second session will focus on reading and literacy instruction and include presentations by North Central professors Lora Tyson and Maureen Kincaid.

Mentor OnLine: More than 110 Postings!

ACI's Mentor On-Line has been a big hit since it went "live" on when? Accessed from www.aciteachers.org, *Mentor OnLine* supports new teachers by providing a convenient way for them to ask questions about academic subjects and teaching methods and receive support from experienced educators and teacher education faculty. New teachers may post questions and comments to obtain mentor and peer feedback. Registered members can post useful classroom tools, such as lesson plans and graphic organizers, and administrators regularly post announcements of upcoming professional development opportunities and ACI events. *Mentor OnLine* also facilitates dialogue on technology, classroom management, math, science and reading/literacy, and keeps new teachers connected between ACI's *Teacher Induction Academy* sessions.

Check out *Mentor OnLine*, by logging on to www.aciteachers.org. Teachers can register by entering their name, email address and information about their teaching assignment. Once registered, teachers can post items and read responses at any time. For more information, please call Chris Johnston at 312-263-2391, ext. 21, or email chris.johnston@acifund.org.

Teacher Induction Academy

ACI's 2004-2005 Teacher Induction Academy: Reality Classroom concluded on April 22, 2005, with a session at Lewis University's Oak Brook Campus. Approximately 45 people attended, including 17 first-year, 7 second-year and 3 third-year teachers. The five-hour event (3:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.) included plenary sessions for all teachers, as well as specialized breakout sessions for teachers at each experience level. Teachers in their first year of service participated in an engaging session, *Students with Special Needs: Sitting on Their Side of the Desk*, with Professor Therese Hogan, of Dominican University. Professor Rebecca Clemente of North Central College explored assessment strategies with second-year teachers in *How Am I Doing? – Providing Feedback to Students and Parents*. Third-year teachers continued their in-depth study of differentiated instruction in *Planning for Differentiated Instruction*, with Kathy Berry of

Strategic Learning Initiatives. One enthusiastic comment captured the positive responses to the session, “I have been confirmed and reassured as to why I love to teach. Thank you!”

ACI's 2005-2006 Teacher Induction Academy, *The Amazing Profession: Journeys in Teaching*, kicks off with a summer retreat, June 23-24, 2005 at Lake Lawn Resort in Delevan Wisconsin. Keynote speakers will include Anita Kishel, a consultant for Ruby Payne's *Framework for Understanding Poverty*; Alan Lawrence Sitomer, Los Angeles Public Schools teacher and author of *The Hoopster* and *Hip-Hip Poetry and the Classics*; and Deb Perryman, Illinois Teacher of the Year, Elgin public schools science teacher, and Aurora University graduate. All attendees have been invited to contribute to a *Bright Ideas and Best Practices* book, and will choose from a wide variety of breakout sessions, with topics including *Hip Hop Language Arts, Action Science, Read Alouds, Literacy Supports for ELL Students, Grant Writing for Teachers, Best Practices in Math and Best Practices in Special Education*. Participants also will attend the first breakout sessions addressing topics that will extend throughout the 2005-06 school year: classroom management (1st year); assessment (2nd year); differentiated instruction (3rd year); and new this year, for 4th year teachers, using technology in the classroom.

ALTERNATIVE AND ACCELERATED CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Transition to Teaching

Two new Alternative Certification cohorts in Secondary Math and Science started their coursework in April: 10 interns began McKendree College's program and will teach this fall in the East St. Louis Schools. Another cohort of 12 interns started in the Concordia University partnership program, which includes Elmhurst College, Saint Xavier University and the Golden Apple Foundation. These interns will teach this fall in the Chicago Public Schools.

Rockford College has launched a *Transition to Teaching Partnership*. This alternative certification program prepares interns as bilingual teachers, with intern placements in the Chicago Public Schools. The first group of 8 interns will complete the program this year. Recruitment is underway for a new cohort to start in May and June.

Illinois Special Education Collaborative

24 candidates began Saint Xavier University's *I-SPED* program, in January. Partnering with the Chicago Public Schools, these interns are paired with certified public school teachers with whom they will work until June. Classes and clinicals will continue through the summer. This cohort is testing the model special education certification program Saint Xavier has developed with FIPSE grant support.

PILOT AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

The next deadline for proposal submissions is August 15, 2005. Since the first round of proposals last fall, a streamlined proposal and review process and evaluation rubric have been developed to facilitate rapid funding decisions. Guidelines for implementing

projects also have been developed to add to *ACI-CFS'* ongoing data collection efforts. The May 1 proposals are being reviewed by an evaluation committee composed of *ACI-CFS* implementation team members.

CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES

Teachers representing 10 elementary and middle schools and the high school in Waukegan District 60 will participate in Lake Forest's TQE-funded *Linking Learning Communities: New Teacher Leadership Project*. This professional development project will address the needs of new teachers in high-need schools. A comprehensive needs assessment is being implemented as a prelude to a summer institute, scheduled for one week in June and one week in August at Lake Forest College. During the institute, teachers will participate in sessions that focus on using resources in the Waukegan community to support culturally relevant curricula and on improving practice by developing and researching instruction that includes assessment design and differentiation. Between the June and August sessions, teachers will complete research to refine their projects and prepare to reconvene for the August institute. Lake Forest's Education Department and liberal arts faculty worked through the spring faculty have been working this spring with a coordinating committee including master teachers from Waukegan District 60 teachers to design and facilitate this exciting project.

Lake Forest's pre-service teacher candidates who are interns in Waukegan schools have designed and implemented curricula to develop culturally relevant pedagogy in their classrooms. Arts and sciences faculty worked with interns to develop a better understanding of Waukegan as a community and to build the resource base for units of instruction. Interns have drawn from these resources to support planning, instructional implementation and assessment design, and have developed curricular resources that will be used in the future by their teacher-mentor.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 6:** Implementation Team Meeting (ACI, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm)
- May 20-21:** Inner City Practicum Orientation (North Central College)
- June 1:** Implementation Team Meeting (ACI, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm)
- June 23-24:** Induction Academy Summer Retreat (Lake Lawn Resort, Delevan, WI)
Contact heather.anderson@acifund.org, or call 312-263-2391 ext. 37
for information and registration.
- July 13:** Implementation Team Meeting (ACI, 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm.)
- August 8-12:** Science Teachers Workshop, North Central College, coordinated
by Professors John Zenchak, Biology, and Mary Jean Lynch, Psychology.
For more information, contact John Zenchak at jjzenchak@noctrl.edu.
- August 15:** Deadline to submit proposals for Pilot and Demonstration Projects.