As another semester (and decade) comes to a close, it is good time to reflect on our where we are as a Department and look to the future. Even during these tough economic times, there is much to be hopeful about in 2010, as we start a new semester (and a new decade). As I reflect back on this past year, I’d like to highlight some of our accomplishments.

The Department recently sponsored its first ever luncheon and meeting with all lecturers who teach in our programs. Their commitment to the Ed Leadership department was evident in their thoughtful ideas and invaluable insights. I feel fortunate that our students have the opportunity to learn from some of the best. We will be showcasing one of our lecturers in each issue; last month we introduced our newest lecturer, Dr. Deborah Laudermilk and this month we are featuring Dr. David Brax, EdD 1997.

During the past year, Educational Leadership faculty, alumni, and students have been actively involved with state and local educational organizations and making a difference for Kansas schools. Dr. Craig Elliott, Senior Fellow, has been burning up the miles to reach out and strengthen relationships with our regional service centers. He and ESS-DACK director Mike Cook, EdD 2004, have partnered to schedule research presentations for the monthly Superintendents meetings. Doctoral students JK Campbell and Mark Whitener from Ark City Public Schools recently presented a session on Charlotte Danielson’s teacher evaluation framework. Diane Gross, EdD 2008, is currently President of the Kansas Staff Development Council (KSDC). KSDC Board Members include doctoral students Dawn Johnson and Gina Marx, and Holly Francis, a graduate of the Master’s and District Leadership programs. Dawn is also Chair of the 21st Century Skills Workgroup. Deborah Perbeck, EdD 1999 is past president and Ex Officio KSDC-KASCD Liaison.

Papers from three of the four 2008-09 field studies have been accepted for presentation at the prestigious American Educational Research Association’s (AERA) annual conference to be held next spring in Denver. Teresa San Martin, EdD 2008, also had a paper from her dissertation research accepted. This conference only accepts about 30% of the proposals submitted, so having a paper accepted validates the quality of research produced in our field studies and dissertations. WSU Educational Leadership faculty and students are not only making a difference for local schools, our research has national implications and is informing the broader discussion about issues confronting public education in the U.S. Look for more details about our presentations at the AERA conference in a spring issue of the newsletter.

We are small, but a mighty department and good things are happening, in large part thanks to the support and hard work of our alumni, students, and friends.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jean Patterson
Teacher Leader Licensure Presentation

On November 11, Drs. Pat Terry and Craig Elliott, Senior Fellows for Educational Leadership presented to superintendents at the monthly ESSDACK meeting in Hutchinson, “Do we need teacher leader standards and licensure?” Teacher Leader standards were approved in October by the Kansas State Department of Education’s Board of Education. The reasoning for the presentation was to help determine the understanding and need for Wichita State to develop this new licensure from those leaders in the field, as this would be a joint venture between the departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Leadership. For those not familiar with these new standards, this work was developed from the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission that was endorsed and initiated by the KSDE Board in July of 2007.

By definition: Teacher leaders are educators who use their expertise to improve student learning by working outside the classroom in formal and informal ways to augment the professional skills of colleagues, to strengthen the culture of the school, and to improve the quality of instruction. Teacher leader candidates would first need to hold a Master’s degree with a professional teaching license and have five years of accredited school experience in order to start the coursework for this licensure. If there is enough interest and need from the school districts for this licensure we are certainly willing to lay the necessary groundwork to develop such a program. We really need input from our colleagues in the field on this issue and would welcome any and all comments. If you would like a copy of the Teacher Leader Standards and/or to visit more about this issue, please email or call either Pat pat.terry@wichita.edu 316 734 2445 or Craig craig.elliott@wichita.edu or 316 253 8530.
Featuring:

Dr. David Brax, M.Ed., Ed.S., Ed.D.

No doubt that many district leaders throughout south central Kansas have benefited from Dr. Brax's instruction as he has been teaching the Financial Support of Education course for the past nine years. Currently, he is in the 11th year as the superintendent of the Buhler Schools and prior to this held two previous superintendencies at Ellinwood and Pretty Prairie. Dr. Brax started his career in education as a high school Social Science teacher in Arkansas City, a position he held before assuming his first leadership position in 1987. He has been an assistant principal at Winfield and was the building leader at Anderson County when the high school and middle school staffs were combined.

Dr. Brax has held many professional and civic leadership responsibilities over the years in every community in which he and his family has lived. In addition, he has made many presentations to his peers both regionally and nationally over the course of his professional career. For individuals who have been “around” for some time a few of those presentations were made for the Wichita State School Study Council when it was in existence.

Dr. Brax approaches the content of his course in a very practical way in that students are involved in projects. These projects include analyzing and developing their respective school district’s budget and in leading discussion around current and relevant journal articles. Both activities are extremely important for the knowledge gained and valuable experiences in today’s economic climate. In addition, Dr. Brax has access to and provides many guest speakers for his students that they might not otherwise have the opportunity from which to learn. In a recent course evaluation a student wrote; “Dr. Brax has a great knowledge about school finance and he makes it understandable to everyone. I came into the class with very little knowledge and left with a good understanding of the subject matter. Dr. Brax provides a lot of meaningful materials and brought speakers who were great complements to the class. Dr. Brax was genuine and helpful. Thank You.”

With this we also add our thank you to Dr. Brax as we are indeed very fortunate to have him as a lecturer in the Department of Educational Leadership.

Celebrations

Dalia Hale successfully defended her dissertation, A Case Study of Immigrant Latino Parents Who Use a Newcomer Placement Center in an Urban District, on November 20, 2009. Dalia is Director of Wichita USD 259’s Multilingual Educational Services Department.

Please send Dr. Hale your congratulations and good wishes. She will be hooded, along with Robert Morton and Michael Hester, at WSU’s fall commencement to be held in Koch Arena at 2:30 pm December 13, 2009.
EdD Field Studies 2009-2010

Faculty and students in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership are conducting three yearlong field studies, two with area school districts and one with a community college. The field studies provide an opportunity for doctoral students to apply what they learn about the research process. The collaborating organizations also benefit because they select the field study topics.

Dr. Sherry Goodvin and Dr. Linda Bakken are working with doctoral students Heather Eubank, Wichita USD 259, Shelia Rathbun, Maize USD, Mark Watkins, Neosho Community College, Mohammad Mustafa, EL Graduate Student, Maram Jaradat, EL Graduate Assistant, and Janis Stucky, Wichita USD 259 on a research partnership with Neosho County Community College. The research is a result of a request by Dr. Vicki Smith, President of Neosho County Community college, to obtain data in order to determine if the needs of the communities served in the service area are being met. This study is designed to gather data from high school seniors, high school counselors, and taxpayers in the counties served by Neosho County Community College. The team will conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups with these external stakeholders. The findings from the study will be incorporated into future strategic plans. This is the first field study partnership between the educational leadership department at Wichita State University and an area community college.

Continuing a productive relationship with Wichita USD 259, Dr. Jean Patterson and Dr. Pat Terry are working with doctoral students JK Campbell, Ark City USD 470, Gina Marx, Education Consultant, Dale Herl, Independence, MO Public Schools, Dawn Johnson, Little River USD, and Mark Whitener, Ark City USD, to study the second year of America’s Choice comprehensive school reform implementation in two of the district’s Title I middle schools. The team has been busy the past few weeks collecting qualitative data through observing classrooms and conducting interviews and focus groups in each of the schools, as well as interviews with district office personnel. This study is a follow-up to one conducted last year and will provide the district with relevant data to gauge trends, highlight successes and promising practices, and identify challenges to implementation.
In October, the research team of Kris Ehling, Susan Wright, and Kirby Daetwiler presented their 2008-09 action research team's paper entitled *Student Descriptions of Successful Classroom Experiences* at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA) annual conference. Throughout the summer, the presenting team and Lauana Yarbrough met with their advisor, Dr. Cameron Carlson, to rewrite their report into a suitable format for a conference paper presentation. The conference team extended the data analysis from their individual action research projects which also included Kristina Curfman (Kastor) and Paula Green. The researchers conducted a two-part case study in their own schools to review documents and policies describing student success and failure. Then, the researchers interviewed students who met locally defined benchmarks on at least two standardized measures (such as MAP or Kansas State Assessments) but who were not working toward their measured potential, failing subjects or classes. Selected students were asked to describe successful classrooms they felt would be most beneficial to their success.

The conference paper conveyed four findings: Students understand and appreciate teachers’ expectations, Instruction must meet learner’s needs, Effective teachers demonstrate they care for their students, and Student motivation is an intrinsically-driven process: Extrinsic motivators have an inverse effect. The paper draws two conclusions and provides several recommendations for practice. The first conclusion suggests teachers and systems can and should demonstrate care for students. The second conclusion suggests practitioners inspire students to perform, rather than to motivate students through punitive measures. The team’s presentation was well-received and prompted great discussion. Copies of the paper are available by contacting Dr. Cameron Carlson, cbcarlson@wichita.edu.
Faculty/Alumni/Student Publications and Presentations:

Jo Bennett has had accepted for publication in volumes to be published in 2010:


The Ed Leadership Department students and alumni presented numerous sessions at the Kansas Staff Development Council’s Fall Institute held November 3-4, 2009 in Wichita. Current doctoral students Gina Marx, JK Campbell, Kim Burkhalter, Bob Diepenbrock, along with faculty facilitator Dr. Mara Alagic, presented Questions Before Answers & Answers Before Implementation: Setting Your Reform Efforts Up for Success, from their 2008-2009 field study research. Nancy Bolz, EdD 2004 presented Results: Using Data Systemically to Facilitate Shared Leadership; Robert Morton, EdD 2009, co-presented Courageous Conversations; Diane Gross, EdD 2008 was a co-presenter in the session, A Curriculum for Teacher Leadership: Think of the Possibilities; and Deborah Perbeck, EdD 1999, was a co-presenter of The Leader In Me: Developing Leaders One Child at a Time.

Alumni Cameron Carlson, EdD 2007 and Sherry Goodvin, EdD 2005, presented papers at the American Educational Studies Association’s annual meeting held November 4-8, 2009 in Pittsburgh, PA. Cameron presented the paper, Divergent Purposes: Technology Disrupts Assumptions about Catholic School Mission and Sherry presented, Empowering Students Through Interactive Global Learning: Rwanda Alive. Sherry also presented Technology Integration as a Catalyst for Disrupting School Culture, on behalf of doctoral students Lisa Lutz, John Wyrick, Robin Surland, and Diane Nickelson, who were unable to attend the conference.

Students in Jo Bennett’s Ed Doctoral Field Study team are conducting research that will take them to Liberal, KS at least three times this year. The study will gather perspectives from Latino/Hispanic families regarding the priorities they set forth in raising their children, their ideas about school activities, and finally their role in the community. The local school district will benefit from this study, as they will gain a better perspective of the values and cultural context of the majority population of the school (Latino/Hispanic represent 69% of the student population).

The students participating in the Field Study include, Doug Siemens, Bethel College, Teacher Education Program, Natalie Grant, Wichita State University School of Social Work, Lance Stout, Unified School District 480, Larry Callis, Wichita State University School of Liberal Arts & Science, Advising (I to r clockwise beginning in lower left in photo — Dr. Bennett is 2nd from left). These students along with Bennett have worked closely with the superintendent of schools in Liberal, Mr. Vernon Welch, in making sure that the study will be a benefit to the school district. In addition, they have worked collaboratively with Marieka Ford, who works with the Liberal Area Coalition for Families, an independent non-profit organization with a mission to make Liberal, Kansas the best place to raise a family. The students are excited about the research possibilities.

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