**Teacher Quality Enhancement Middle School Project: An Update on Activities**

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**State Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants**

Improving Teacher Quality through:
- Certification standards
- Accountability
- Alternative pathways
- Teacher shortages

**Why Middle Level in Illinois?**

- Only 17% of middle level teachers have specialized training appropriate for adolescent learners.
- Current endorsement requirements are inadequate.
- Need specialized training
- Nearly 1/3 of Illinois students are in the middle grades.

**The TQE Consortium Partners**

- University Faculty
  - Education
  - Arts & Sciences
- Community College Faculty
  - Arts & Sciences
- Middle Level Schools
- Middle Level Teachers in Residence

**Systemic Reform**

- Creating Partnerships Between CSU and Partner Community Colleges and Schools

**Establishing a Connection**

Vernon Johns Middle School: Englewood, Chicago

School Mission:
The Vernon Johns Community Academy will maintain a positive working relationship with parents and community members based on mutual respect and cooperation.

Teacher
CSU alumni
Programmatic/Curricular Goals

- Design a standards-based middle grades teacher preparation program
- Develop faculty expertise in curriculum innovation and web-based design
- Innovate strategic models for attracting more teachers, especially in rural and urban areas
  - Preservice Recruitment
  - Preservice Persistence
  - Preservice Placement
  - Inservice Job Attainment
  - Inservice Induction/Retention
- Increase accessibility via variety of delivery options

Leadership Academy IV

- Professional Development Instructional Materials (Modules)
  - are standards-aligned.
  - help to foster deeper understanding of content in a contextually driven interdisciplinary approach.
  - Acknowledges the unique needs of the middle level learner.
  - helps teachers and their students think about the material in a new way.

Assessing Initial Ideas

Your module should provide constructed (essential) questions:
- to elicit initial teacher and student ideas and help students begin to think about the concepts in the module (standards).
- to place them in a better position to address student difficulties and build on student strengths.
- to aid in the development of instructional materials that will be tested in their own classroom setting.

Designing a lesson

( Assessment Artifact for Graduate Credit)

Teachers should:
- Design a stand alone 2-hour lesson on topics covered in your module.
- Demonstrate that they have utilized results of pretests to address specific student needs.
- Should submit lesson plan, rubric, portfolio evidence, reflection on the growth of their teaching & learning practices, etc. to earn credit.
Implementing the Lesson
(Portfolio Evidence)

Questions for Reflections

- Was the experience enjoyable? challenging?
- Were you able to foster a student-centered learning environment? Were students engaged? Were you able to get students to construct an understanding for themselves or did you find yourself explaining too much?
- In observing other teachers, did you notice things they did that you thought worked very well with the students? things that did not work well with the students?

Reflections

- Include a description of performance on the pre- and posttest. What did the pretests tell you about what should go into your materials for the practicum? Did you see an improvement from the pretest to the posttest?
- How did the actual experience in the class go? Did everything work out well? What items in your materials worked very well? What items need improvement? What would you change for the future?

Future TQE Activities

- Support higher education faculty expertise in technology-enhanced instruction and in middle level best practices.
  - Leadership Academy V in Summer 2005
  - Leadership Academy Mini-Institutes during the 2004-2005 academic year
- Offer workshop or web-enhanced opportunities for teachers at the middle level to earn recertification credit.
- Continue to monitor Middle Level Teacher candidates as they move CC to CSU to CPS.
- Promote and sustain middle level advocacy in the state of Illinois and in the United States.
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