

Professional Learning Community Grants: Congratulations to Grant Recipients!

There were so many fine PLC grant applications this year that choosing the winners was not an easy task. We appreciate the effort you put into the applications and hope you will all try again next year. We are delighted to announce this year's grant recipients:

Full PLC Grants

Fifth Ave. Elem. School, Northport, *The Next Step after Curriculum Mapping*, Ms. Christine Nichols

Ss. Cyril and Methodius School, Diocese of RVC, *Implementing Writers' Workshop in Elementary Grades*, Mrs. Rosemarie Campisi

West Babylon Junior High School, *Reading and Writing Strategies through the Content Areas: A Staff Development Initiative*, Ian Rodgers

Bay Shore Middle School. *Teacher Talk*, Kristina Cope

Micro-grants

T.J. Lahey Elementary School, Harborfields CSD, *Writing Like the Masters*, Rosemarie Palmeri

T.J. Lahey Elementary School, Harborfields CSD, *ELA Data Examination*, Donna Robson

Bayshore UFSD, *An Institute for Multi-Sensory Education*, Kathy Lombardo

Building Professional Learning Communities, Part 2

In last month's issue we introduced, defined and listed the salient attributes of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). This month we will answer more questions about their use and development.

How do PLCs function?

Schools that make a commitment to institute PLC's are communally organized and promote a setting in which staff and students are committed to the school's mission and work together to strengthen it.

Ideally, all staff members view themselves as collectively responsible for the success of the students. Classroom pedagogy changes to engage students in higher intellectual learning tasks. Typically, staff development efforts are more directly tied to teachers' and students' learning needs, as voiced by them. The result is a tighter coupling of students and

staff. "If you can't make a school a great professional place for staff, it's never going to be a great place for kids."

Why are they important? The most effective learning in schools occurs when teachers teach effectively in their own classrooms but also seek and find solutions together. Their goals are shared and time is routinely designated for professional collaboration. Research shows the result to be greater student achievement than is achieved in traditional schools. Additionally, the achievement gaps between students of different backgrounds are smaller.

How are they introduced and developed in schools?

PLCs are most often introduced and developed through professional development sessions.

Collegial circles (or faculty study groups) are a group of educators who come together on a regular basis around a

common goal, interest or issue. Members research a practice and focus on raising student learning.

Action research takes the research teachers have done and applies it to an educational setting with students/teachers. Steps include: finding a topic, writing the question, collecting data, analyzing the information and planning the next step.

Peer coaching involves two teachers observing each other's classes with the objective of helping the other fine-tune teaching ability on a specific topic. It gives teachers another "pair of eyes" in their classrooms.

Peer review is a collaborative examination of student (or teacher) work in a non-threatening environment with the goal of offering collegial insight to optimize student learning.

Professional portfolios document teacher and student work. They help teachers define, evaluate, change and reflect upon their practice.

Kudos to the 2006-2007 SETC Mini-Grant Recipients!

Better Beginnings Award for Elementary Teachers

The Better Beginnings program annually offers a \$1,000 award for excellence to New York State elementary school teachers. The application form is available at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/TEACHING/BBA/bbaindex.htm>, and applications are due by February 16, 2007.

New Cohorts Beginning in the Spring!

- Educational Computing, Stony Brook University (scheduled to be held in Copiague UFSD)
- **Master** of Science in Literacy Education, Dowling College (scheduled to be held in Wheatley Heights)

Call the SETC for information.

**Suffolk's Edge
Teacher Center
31 Lee Avenue
Wheatley Heights, NY 11798
631-254-0107
teacher_center@wsboces.org
Jane Lombardo
Carol Weintraub
Elyse Eusanio**

A record number of applicants were awarded mini-grants this year. We're proud to announce the many recipients below.:

Bridging the Gap: Building an Intra-District Literacy Community among Middle School Teachers, Babylon Junior-Senior High School, Babylon UFSD, Lisa Drance, Carol Polney

Enhancing Robotics Study, Bay Shore High School, Bay Shore UFSD, Brian Brachio, Sal Fandale

Gears in Real Life, Bay Shore HS, Bay Shore UFSD, Charles Kavanagh, Bill Eggert, Andrea Karlan

Curiosity Kits: Using Text Sets to Support All Readers, Bay Shore Middle School, Bay Shore UFSD, Jeannette Sennecca, Peter Southworth, William Burns

Animating History, Gardiner Manor School, Bay Shore UFSD, Vincenzo La Ruina

Kids for Saving the Earth, Gardiner Manor School, Bay Shore UFSD, Carole Forman, Cathy Mercurio

Project C.H.E.F., South Country School, Bay Shore UFSD, Elizabeth Sabo, Adam Shea

The Home School Connection Literacy Program, Susan E. Wiley Elem. School, Copiague UFSD, Cynthia Florio, Claudia Nakash

Organizing and Leveling the Intermediate Classroom Library for Maximizing Reading Success, John F. Kennedy Intermediate School, Deer Park UFSD, Patricia Katz

Distinguished Performance Scholars Program, Ss. Cyril and Methodius School, Diocese of RVC, Donna Montella, Kelly Walsh, Mary Anne Cowan, Judy Keeler, Joe Aliano, Sarah Passarella

Three Cheers for Spelling!, Otsego Elementary School, Half Hollow Hills CSD, Lily Montalbano
Donna Palic

Looking Together at Student Work, Kings Park HS, Kings Park CSD, Sandra Rosenberg, Jill Gregory

Stacks and Structures: Writing Under the Influence, Dickinson Ave. Elementary, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Jane Flurkey, Pam Friedman, Pam Gillmor, Kathleen McCormick, Sandy Schumacher

Creating Cultural Awareness in the Classroom, E. Northport Middle School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Andrew Luberto, Christopher T. Rozmus

Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, E. Northport Middle School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Thuy Pham-Gelles, Paul Newmann

Character Education Through Law and Literacy, 5th Grade Mock Trial, Fifth Ave. Elementary School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Laura Hess, Jennifer Schempp

Community Leadership and Philanthropy for Students in Grades 5-12, Northport High School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, David Scott, Geneva Walker

CSI- An Interdisciplinary Mystery in History, Northport High School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Bernadette Black, Marina Adams

ELA The Law Enforcement Way-Fourth Grade Junior Detectives, Pulaski Road Elementary School, Northport-E. Npt. UFSD, Lori Furnell, Louise Quinn

Leap Pad Literacy Link, Forest Ave. Elementary School, W. Babylon UFSD, Mary Schafer, Toni Kinnear

Listen Up! Enhancing the Listening Environment for Students and Teachers, Santapogue School, W. Babylon UFSD, Jeanne Fitzgerald, Cara Kerr, Heather Paganica

Linking Language to Literacy, South Bay Elem. School, W. Babylon UFSD, Jill DeLuca, Alison Gimberlein

Picture This - Increasing Comprehension Through Visualization, South Bay Elementary School, W. Babylon UFSD, Judith L. Murphy

Let it Snow: We Will Stay Fit, South Bay Elem. School, W. Babylon UFSD, Rich Rowcroft, Tom Galletta

Adventures to the Extreme, Tooker Ave. Elementary School, W. Babylon UFSD, Ed Hilbert, John Kozak

The Memory Project, West Babylon High School, W. Babylon UFSD, Christine Laquinto, Paul Bryan, Lynn Belmont, James Fulton

Speaking of Books, West Babylon High School, W. Babylon UFSD, Hans Haugen, Donna Briody, James Egbert, Constance Whitfield

Reading as a Physical Activity: Healthy Choices Through Literacy, West Babylon High School, W. Babylon UFSD, Patricia Neville, Steve Levy

We hope you will be inspired to write a grant yourself! Please call the Teacher Center for more information.