By Drewe Davey. Teacher, North Grove Elementary School, Sycamore—Northern Illinois’s Elementary Education program has been a very exciting partnership for the Sycamore School District. Currently at North Grove Elementary, our fifth-grade team consists of Dan Wheeler, Jeff Hillmer, and me (Drewe Davey). However, through the co-teaching program that NIU is offering for its students, we have been blessed with two “teacher candidates”. Ben Hoffman and Ashley Morgan have truly been a welcome addition to our team. Meaningful collaboration, new pedagogy, differentiated instruction, and effective communication are just a few of the benefits from this year-long mentorship. Within this model, cooperating teachers are equal to their “candidates” and glean just as many essential teaching techniques as we offer.

Dan, Jeff, and I feel very fortunate to have been chosen to work within the co-teaching program. We have seen the positive results from two educators working in partnership inside the classroom to meet the specific needs of all learners. At North Grove, our fifth-graders rotate from subject to subject throughout the day. This helps their transition to middle school become less stressful. We feel that this has been even more beneficial with our teacher candidates as both Ashley and Ben have planned, instructed, and reflected with all three of us throughout the first semester. As we look forward to the next semester and seeing our candidates each and every day, our expectations are even higher.

Overall, the fifth-grade staff is extremely excited about this new partnership with NIU. We have seen the powerful and positive experience that co-teaching can have with students, parents, administration, and staff. In our eyes, the standard has been set very high for future candidates. The vision of the program at Northern is clear: highly qualified instructors are created for a lifetime of teaching. The co-teaching model is the best way to prepare future teachers and enhance programming for our students. Dan, Jeff, and I are excited about the upcoming months with Ms. Morgan and Mr. Hoffman.
By Emily Weller, Teacher, Littlejohn, DeKalb and Jessica Greenen, Teacher Candidate—Elementary Education—A local third-grade classroom learned all about area in math class. For this lesson students were split into cooperative learning groups. Groups were then provided with a letter from a school staff member explaining a problem in the building that needed to be solved. They were also given a large piece of butcher paper to represent the area that needed to be found.

After getting into groups, the students were provided with supplies to help guide them in solving the problem. The supplies included: math reference book, yard sticks, rulers, 1 foot-by-1 foot square pattern, pencils, and crayons. Students investigated the meaning of area, in order to determine which supplies they would use. Groups experimented with many tools before deciding the best way to solve their problem.

After 15-20 minutes of cooperative group interaction, students took a field trip around the room to look at each group’s findings. One group member acted as the leader and explained the method and outcome used to the class. Each group saw how different strategies were used to determine the area of a rectangle.

This hands-on activity was a great warm-up to solving area problems in the math journals. Students were able to find and share patterns that they realized through their authentic experience and apply that to the Everyday Math Lesson.

Using a variety of co-teaching strategies, the teachers were able to engage, monitor, question, and challenge groups during their discovery lesson.
By Andrew Heimer, Teacher Candidate – DeKalb High School - Over the past few months the co-teaching model has been working extremely well. This model allows for a more in-depth approach for the teacher candidate, myself, to learn how to become an effective teacher. The co-teaching model allows for constant observation by the cooperating teacher, who can point out flaws in the teaching methods or strategies in the teacher candidate’s performance. My personal favorite aspect to this model is that there are now two teachers in the room at one time. Students have the ability to approach either co-teacher to ask questions or have concepts re-taught. While the cooperating teacher is working with a few students, I may be at the back of the room working with other students. The students now have more access to asking questions in the classroom and receiving extra help when needed. This seems to follow the Parallel Teaching strategy. Prior to the co-teaching meetings, I was unaware of the different styles of teaching that Mrs. Kovarik and I were practicing. The chemistry classroom allows for all types of teaching methods, and it seems as though we have done, or at least tried, each one. The laboratory setting allows for Station Teaching, Parallel Teaching, Supplemental Teaching, and Alternative Teaching.

We have recently begun Team Teaching. The Team Teaching days consist of me starting out the class by going over a review of a specific topic. After the first 5-10 minutes have passed, Mrs. Kovarik will begin teaching the major content for the day’s class. At the end, I will then go through guided practice of the types of problems students will be required to complete for the homework. The Team Teaching strategy really helps to bring me in front of the classroom more and teach to the entire class. This strategy exposes me to the difficulty in teaching, but also allows me to gain more confidence in this area. The more experience I have in the classroom, the more effective teacher I will be in co-teaching next semester.

The co-teaching model benefits both the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher. The model works especially well when a professional working relationship is built between the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher. This relationship is key to the success of the co-teaching model. Mrs. Kovarik and I work together very fluidly and effectively. I attribute my success in the program thus far to the phenomenal working relationship I have with my cooperating teacher.

“I attribute my success in the program thus far to the phenomenal working relationship I have with my cooperating teacher.”
Co-Teaching at Leggee Elementary in District 158

By Amy Goldberg, Gayle Scime, Sarah Goodlow, and Dian Neumann – Cooperating Teachers, Leggee Elementary, Huntley #158—NIU teacher candidates have been busy at Leggee Elementary in Huntley, not only in the classroom, but also attending meetings, professional development and evening events. Candidates, Sarah Palazzetti, Rachel Bolen, Jaclyn Snell, and Kylie Johnson greeted students and parents attending Family Reading Night dressed as their favorite Mo Willems storybook characters.

In the classroom we, as cooperating teachers, are excited to have an extra pair of hands and eyes. The co-teaching model helps us support the varied learning needs of our students. Each week the candidates are becoming more involved in creating and teaching whole and small group lessons. Here are a few examples:

Third-grade candidate, Sarah Palazzetti introduced an animal life cycle unit by facilitating an investigative activity that allowed students to explore the structure of cooked and raw eggs. Sarah also taught an Everyday Math lesson using manipulatives to build polygons and teach the concept of perimeter.

In fifth-grade, Rachel Bolen has been working with guided reading groups and doing some remediation with individual students. She also put together an election unit/Power Point teaching students all about the presidential election process. Students watched the election results at home, and then filled in a U.S. map showing their understanding of the Electoral College.

Fourth-grade candidate, Kylie Johnson, created and presented an interactive lesson teaching the students about the different types of government, as well as a hands-on lesson in math introducing the students to thousandths. In addition, Kylie has worked with and prepared for guided reading groups.

Third-grade candidate, Jaclyn Snell, created and implemented intervention lessons that helped students form a deeper understanding of sequencing, cause and effect, and drawing conclusions. Jaclyn has also been working with guided reading groups and teaching interactive math lesson about perimeter, area, and multiplication arrays.

We are anxiously awaiting next semester when we have the candidates with us all week. The possibilities of what we can achieve together are endless!
By Allison Beatty and Laura Hart, Teacher Candidates, Elementary Education, DeKalb - As a portion of our curriculum, teacher candidates in the DeKalb and Sycamore districts were enrolled in a science methods course with Dr. C. Sheldon Woods this semester. The course content included exploring best practices and multiculturalism in science education, integration across curricular areas, and practical applications of scientific topics across grade levels. Course content was supported by opportunities for experience in service learning, as well as extracurricular professional development.

In October, Dr. Woods provided teacher candidates with several “Spooky Science” activities to use in our co-taught classrooms. Teacher candidate, Laura Hart, created “Gluep” (aka “Monster Slime) for her first-graders at Brooks Elementary School in DeKalb. The students had a lot of fun with the substance, but also had an eagerness to question, hypothesize, and test new variables. The recipe was made available to students and their families on the class website of Debbie Prellwitz and Laura Hart.

In the duration of the science methods course, teacher candidates also learned about the scientific processes that are critical in the development of the manner in which students explore scientific content. These processes are essential in the ever-changing field. Teacher candidates were able to incorporate these strategies into the 5E unit assigned in the course. By implementing several activities from their units in their clinical placements, teacher candidates were able to explore techniques that support student learning through hands-on science lessons. Teacher candidate, Allison Beatty, engaged her first-grade students in activities that examined the interdependent relationship of animals and plants. Students actively explored different textures of animal coverings and their varied purposes. These activities were connected to bees, the subject of the week’s reading unit.

This course provided an experience necessary for proficiency in educating students in the content area of science. Because the course coincided with the clinical experience, it allowed teacher candidates to reflect on their lessons, improving the quality of science instruction they can provide for their students.
PDS Success

Elementary Education: First Professional Semester in St. Charles

The candidates were asked to identify one thing they liked about the PDS.

- classroom management
- implementing technology with 4th grade bilingual second graders
- making the connections phenomenal teaching experience
- communicating with students
- growing
- reflection & inquiry
- light bulbs!
- age group
- longer clinical experience reading and writing blocks
- Opportunity to be in a special education room
- Working one-on-one

St. Charles Candidates:
- Chandra Murphy
- Kelsey Lenhardt
- Jaqueline Alba
- Kiley LeFeuvre
- Lisa Borgo
- Ashley Gerts
- Dawnn Montague
- Kristianna Kunz
- Lauren Muller
- Marijke-Nicole Bakker
- Steven Byrne
- Anita Schmitt
- Melissa Miller
- Emily Meyers
- DiFrancesca Kelly
- Alyssa Koch
- Ben Riebock
The candidates were asked to identify one thing they liked about the PDS.

DeKalb Candidates:
Laura Hart
Ivan Alfaro
Lori Lewandowski
Dominique Smith
Allison Beatty
Kristen Kenny
Breann Frapasella
Eunice Lee
Danelle Davis
Jacklyn Jaje
Jessica Greenen
Laura Wiet
Amanda Hopkins
Cassie Brue
Sara Grehn
Logan Cann
Dane Huseman
Kristin Liewald

- making a connection before the experience
- feeling welcomed
- excitement about math
- being there for a full year
- constant feedback
- learning to network
- helping to set up and take down the classroom
- learning about my students
- participating in family night
- opportunity to try out all the strategies of co-teaching
- being part of the school
- having a variety of mentors
- collaboration with all the staff
- having time to reflect and adjust
- attending parent/teacher conferences
- being there for a full year
- having a desk
- respect
- recognized as a teacher
By Jackie Jaje, Teacher Candidate, Elementary Education, DeKalb — Mrs. Moan’s first-grade classroom at Lincoln Elementary in DeKalb had a “snow day” on December 12, 2012. Since the students had great behavior the week before, their class won the PBIS school-wide class raffle. The students put the paws they earned into a raffle with the kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade classes. Our first-grade classroom was able to choose a celebration for the whole class to enjoy together. This is special because the raffle only happens once a month. The celebration they decided on was a snow party because they have been wishing for snow. The idea to have a snow party came from the book, *Snip, Snip… Snow!* by Nancy Poydar. It is about a little girl who is upset that it had not snowed yet, so she and her classmates decide to make snowflakes in school. As the little girl taped her paper snowflake to the window, she saw real snowflakes falling outside. By having our snow day party, the students hoped that they would see snow fall from the sky, too.

First, the students made edible snowmen out of marshmallows, pretzels, chocolate chips, mini Oreos, and Twizzlers. The students loved making the snowmen and then being able to eat them! They turned out very cute! Next, the students made paper snowflakes. The students were really excited to make the snowflakes. They worked very hard at making them.

Then, the students made fake snow! They were given the inside of a baby diaper and added water to it in a pie pan. The students mixed the baby diaper and the water together until they had a mixture similar to snow. We did not tell the students that it was a baby diaper until the end. They went crazy when they found out what made the snow! Although it was a mess, the students had a blast making fake snow! The students were each able to take a small bag of snow home to show their families.

The last activity we did for our snow party was a snowball fight. Each of the students crumpled up two pieces of tissue paper to make snowballs. The students were split up into two teams and stood on different sides of the room. The students were given a minute to throw their snowballs onto the other team’s side. The key to this game was that when the time was up, which ever team had the least number of snowballs on their side won. The students had a so much fun throwing snowballs in the classroom!

Overall, it was a great day to have a snow party, even if we didn’t see any snow falling from the sky outside!
Co-Teaching Makes Its Way into Sycamore District 427

By Ryan Janisch, Principal, North Grove Elementary, Sycamore - This year the Sycamore School District embarked upon a new partnership with Northern Illinois University. The school district partnered with NIU in the district’s first elementary co-teaching program. In the program, NIU students finish their last clinical experience and their full student teaching placement with the same classroom teacher. This placement began on the first day of school in August and will extend to the final weeks of May.

This program makes sense on many different levels. For the teacher candidates from NIU, they get to work in collaboration with a team of teachers for an entire school year. They also get to experience the school year from the first days of school to the last days. The teacher candidates are treated like staff members, and they are no longer considered visitors in the building. Many of the candidates have joined building committees and fulfilled other professional duties usually outside the scope of a traditional student teaching placement.

For classroom teachers, they are able to open the doors of their classroom and mentor new young professionals. While completing this goal, they are still able to stay in the classroom with the students. The additional teacher in the room allows us to have a better grasp on discipline, interventions, lesson extensions, and more. We are able to complete our guided reading rotations in half the time allowing for other types of instruction to take place.

The classroom teachers and the teacher candidates have also had the opportunity to train on the co-teaching strategies. These strategies provide a unique instructional approach to lessons the teachers have taught several times.

Parents and students have expressed that they enjoy being a part of the program also. They are able to benefit from two adults in the room and they welcome the co-teaching benefits. Student appreciate the extra attention and individual instruction they are provided. Parents like the extra teacher in the classroom while maintaining the expertise of their assigned classroom teacher.

We look forward to a long term relationship with Northern Illinois University and the co-teaching program. From all indications this program has improved the traditional model for all parties involved.
The following is a letter that was sent to the principal at Mackeben Elementary School in Huntley District 158. We got permission from the parent to include this letter in our newsletter.

Mrs. Zayas,

I wanted to take a moment to write you and let you know how impressed my wife and I are with our daughter’s kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Scholl, and her student teacher, Ms. Fraker.

As an assistant principal at a high school, I usually only receive e-mails about teachers from disgruntled parents; however, I want to commend both Mrs. Scholl and Ms. Fraker on their teaching and professionalism.

We’ve been impressed by Mrs. Scholl and Ms. Fraker since curriculum night in August, when they previewed the curriculum and their educational philosophies. Since day one, our daughter has been very engaged in the classroom activities. She comes home excited to tell us about what she worked on during station time and eager to practice reading, math, and being a ‘brave speller.’ I don’t think our daughter would transfer those skills and terminology so easily into our home if they weren’t being consistently, explicitly, and enthusiastically reinforced in the classroom. Mrs. Scholl obviously has a strong base of instructional practices that, combined with her passion for her students, ignites in them a passion for learning.

It’s nothing short of endearing that she refers to her students as her “friends,” yet another Mrs. Scholl-ism that has become a common expression in our home.

We were further impressed by Mrs. Scholl and Ms. Fraker at our recent parent-teacher conference. During it, they shared a wealth of data and student work samples, and explained each piece clearly. They made great suggestions and provided impressive supplementary resources so that we can continue to support our daughter’s learning at home. Ms. Fraker led much of the conference and did so with a level of confidence and competence I have not seen in most student teachers. She had a multitude of examples and illustrations that demonstrated that in a relatively brief time, she has made the effort to really get to know our daughter and I’m sure, her other students as well.

My wife and I have spent our careers as educators, but are relatively new to the scene from the “parent” perspective. It has been an absolute pleasure to see our daughter thrive under the tutelage of such gifted teachers and within the walls of such an impressive school, and we are grateful to you, and most especially Mrs. Scholl and Ms. Fraker, for the ways they have nurtured and grown our daughter already this year.

Thank you,

Josh Schumacher

Parent Support—CUSD 158

“The PDS in District 158 has been extremely successful during the 1st semester of implementation. I am excited to see what 2nd semester brings when the teacher candidates are in the classroom every day! This year-long co-teaching PDS model certainly benefits the teacher candidate, the cooperating teacher, the students and the district as a whole. I am confident we will see gains in student achievement.”

Jessica Lombard, Assistant Superintendent, CUSD 158
Integrating Technology: Richmond Intermediate in St. Charles

By Dr. Cindy York – ETRA Professor - Lisa Chinn and Connie Unger, two third-grade teachers at Richmond Intermediate School, asked to do a lesson with pre-service teachers from NIU. As the professor of 15 students in a technology integration course I agreed to work with them. This resulted in Lisa coming into the pre-service teachers’ course and describing to them what happens in a one-to-one iPad classroom. Some of the pre-service teachers were completing their clinical experiences at Richmond and had experienced iPads, but the rest were at David Elementary and had not worked with iPads with the students.

The next week, the pre-service teachers went to Richmond and, along with the third graders, were described the lesson. The lesson entailed using Popplet (a brainstorming concept map App on the iPad) to find information about the Southwest Native Americans. Some of the things they had to find on a pre-determined website were about the climate, food, shelter, etc. The third graders were told that they were the experts and that they needed to teach the NIU students how to use the iPad for this activity. The third graders felt ownership of the activity since they were the experts teaching the NIU students.

As we walked around the room, we noticed the third graders demonstrating iPad tips/tricks such as the four-finger swipe to switch between the Popplet and the website. The two groups worked together for about 45-minutes. The following week, Lisa and Connie came back into the pre-service teachers’ NIU classroom to debrief and hear what their experience was. We believe that both groups benefited from this experience, especially the NIU students not at the iPad school. Providing different learning experiences for both the third graders and the NIU students is an opportunity afforded by the school being a PDS. We had access to a situation we would not normally have on campus.
PDS Success

Co-teaching in Action: Stations Taught by Co-Teachers

By Paula Moan and Jean Searls, Cooperating Teachers, Lincoln Elementary, DeKalb

– One student examines the star she finds inside the sliced apple at her desk. Underneath her prediction of whether an apple will sink or float, she writes her discovery that it floats. She then counts the seeds she finds within her apple underneath what she predicted before the apple was cut. She is waiting to be called to the back table with her station group to start making applesauce with her teacher. Another group sits with headphones on at the listening station listening to stories their teacher has found. Another group is writing what they have learned about Johnny Appleseed; after all, it is his birthday. An NIU co-teacher works in the corner of a room with a group of students working on apple math. They have been learning about the combinations of what makes ten, so they are reading a book and coloring how many green apples and how many red apples are on each tree. They then record all the ways they can combine two numbers to make ten. The co-teacher works with individuals reading the pages and using “math talk” to prompt how to read addition problems.

All of this is just another day in a first-grade classroom at Lincoln Elementary School. The co-teachers collaborate with their mentor teachers to plan stations that will run throughout the morning. Because students can be separated into smaller groups working with two teachers in their class, they are getting even more individual attention and support. This co-teaching model is new to DeKalb schools, but already students are benefitting from sharing two teachers in their room instead of only one. The co-teachers have benefitted from starting the year out watching how a classroom is set up and the planning it takes to make stations run smoothly after six weeks of school. The cooperating teachers are benefitting from another set of hands and two other brains with which to collaborate. And as for the applesauce... 

...well it was de-li-cious!
Reflection on First Professional in St. Charles

By Kristianna Kunz, Teacher Candidate, Elementary Education, St. Charles - I have always had a pas-sion for working with individuals with special needs. Though I am in the Elementary Education program at Northern Illinois University, I was fortunate enough to be placed in Mrs. Ploszek’s combined kinder-garten and first-grade special education class at Davis Primary School in St. Charles for my clinical experi-ence. My time spent with my cooperating teacher and my students has significantly intensified my love for working in the special education field. Working with Mrs. Ploszek was truly a pleasure. I do not feel as though I could have received a better placement or mentor. I have learned so much from her and have gained an incredible amount of insight for how to work with students who have different disabilities, accommodations needed for individual students, and how to handle unique situations. I have experi-enced the huge heart that it takes to work with these truly special students.

At the beginning of this semester and my clinical experience, I participated in a lot of one-on-one instruc-tion with a kindergarten student who has brain damage and neurological issues, but one who has not yet been diagnosed with a specific disability. For the first month or two of school, this student was not able to write any of his letters, let alone his name. Every morning, this student and I would practice writing the letter “E”, and by the end of my clinical experience, he was able to write his entire first name. Seeing him write his name all by himself without any help or guidance and hearing him verbally say each letter as he wrote it, was exciting and emotional in itself, but being able to be a part of his parent/teacher conference and seeing the excitement, emotion, and gratitude in his mother’s eyes was by far one of the most amaz-ing moments I have ever experienced.

Having the opportunity to be placed in a special education classroom at a Professional Development School has taught me so much and has opened me up to a world of prospects that I might not have oth-erwise discovered. I have gained so much insight during the experience and it has helped me in confirm-ing that I would like to follow in Mrs. Ploszek's footsteps and eventually gain an endorsement in special education.
By Debbie Prellwitz, Cooperating Teacher, Brooks Elementary, DeKalb—I knew from the initial interview that my NIU teacher candidate, Laura Hart, and I would make a great team. I was excited about this new program. There were so many wonderful benefits for the teacher candidate, such as seeing the start of the school year and all the preparation to get the room and curriculum ready for our students. Laura would get to make those student connections early and build upon them as the year progressed. In January when she’s here every day, she would already be familiar with the curriculum and classroom routines. There were many positives in the co-teaching model for Laura, yet I never dreamed the benefits would also be so great for me and our first-grade students!

Laura and I have formed a true teaching partnership. We have embraced the co-teaching model so that now it has become second nature in our classroom. If one of us is lead teacher and has to stop to assist a student, the other jumps in without hesitation to keep the lesson flowing. We are able to draw upon each other’s strengths and knowledge to help guide and plan for our students’ learning.

The co-teaching model provides more classroom experience for the teacher candidates. NIU and their teaching faculty have done an outstanding job of preparing the teacher candidates for the classroom experience. As I watch Laura teach her class assignments, it allows me time to view current research based strategies and best practices.

For example, each year I take my students on a virtual voyage on the Mayflower on our classroom SMART Board through the Scholastic website. While planning this lesson with Laura, she suggested incorporating the role-play strategy during the journey. Students were assigned roles such as the ship captain, sailor, Pilgrim church leader, and Pilgrim parent. They used critical thinking skills to problem-solve after a terrible storm stopped the Mayflower’s progress. Cooperatively, the participating students decided whether to turn back or continue on the uncertain journey to the new world. Audience members compared the responses of different groups, noting the ways in which the groups’ strategies were effective.

The students were so engaged as they learned an important part of history from various perspectives. Together we created an unforgettable experience for our students.

Throughout this co-teaching journey, I feel as though I have a respected and valued colleague in the room teaching with me. It really has become “our” classroom, and it is our young students who are truly benefiting. We couldn’t ask for better than that!

Kaneland is very excited to begin the PD Schools journey with Northern Illinois this next semester. Our staff members have already benefitted from the training on co-teaching techniques and have already implemented some of the ideas within their classrooms. The staff is so eager to begin having the NIU teachers come and partner with them as they learn from each other over the course of the next two semesters. As a district office administrator I am eager to see not only how the future educators grow, but how our staff will grow professionally as well from the experience.

Sarah Mumm, Director of Educational Services K—5
Architects of Change – Building a Foundation for 21st Century Teachers in Professional Development Schools

By Cathy Schaff, Instructor, NIU, ETRA—In an increasingly diverse, yet interconnected world, pre-service teachers of 21st century learners need to acquire knowledge and skills that promote 21st century pedagogy. One critical component of a 21st century teacher education program is the development of productive relationships with schools that serve as sites to integrate coursework and theory in clinical settings. These collaborative relationships are often found in Professional Development Schools (PDS). As an alternative to the ‘traditional’ one semester student teaching model, students based in Professional Development Schools are actively engaged and immersed in the culture of the school community from the beginning of the academic year. This immersion helps our students develop a more complete understanding of the dynamic, complex environment in today’s schools. The 32 week co-teaching experience also provides our students with substantive opportunities for real-world practice, collaboration, and reflection. The benefit of this hybrid teaching/learning model for novice teachers is that it allows them to benefit from integrating coursework and pedagogy in a realistic environment.

One of the most significant components in developing and maintaining a PDS is the collaborative process between the school (or school district) and the university. While the PDS-NIU relationship can be a ‘work in progress’, its ultimate role is to provide our students with an effective experience merging theory and practice as part of a holistic, integrated 21st century teacher preparation program.

Co-Teaching Training in our Districts

By Tris Ottolino, PDS Coordinator, NIU—In April, NIU hosted the trainers from St. Cloud State University. At that time 40 teachers, administrators, and faculty/staff were trained. The teachers and administrators were from four districts. This past fall, over 70 additional teachers and administrators and 70 teacher candidates from NIU were also trained to implement Co-Teaching into the classrooms. The candidates were from various programs from NIU. An additional 40 teachers and 40 teacher candidates are being training this spring so they can implement the strategies for Co-Teaching. The most common comment we have gotten from teachers, administrators, and candidates is that this model is great! They love the idea of being able to get right into the mix of teaching. The candidates have enjoyed using the different strategies in order to teach their lessons. All in all, the model has been successful. The most valuable asset is that the children in the classrooms are getting more attention from their co-teachers. For the children, this is a positive aspect as they are able to ask and get answers to questions more quickly. It is our hope that we will have some great data to share with you in the spring newsletter. Research on the co-teaching model will be conducted in all five districts. Currently, NIU is engaged in using the Co-Teaching model in each of the following districts: Huntley District 158, Sycamore District 427, DeKalb District 428, Kaneland District 302, and St. Charles District 303.
By **Dr. Jenny Parker** and **Dr. James Ressler**, Instructors, NIU, KNPE—In the last PDS Newsletter we announced the initiation of a professional development relationship between Clinton Rosette Middle School (CRMS) in DeKalb District 428 and the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education at NIU. After 12 months of extensive planning, including the development of materials to implement three instructional models, scheduling logistics, and grant proposals to support physical education at CRMS, the actual project started in August 2012. Jenny Parker and Jim Ressler (KNPE, NIU) began co-teaching one 7th grade PE class daily in collaboration with Jen Montavon (CRMS PE). Instructional models taught included Adventure-Based Learning (ABL), Sport Education and Fitness Education, each with their own set of distinct outcomes. Daily teaching has continued for two full quarters and all lessons have been digitally recorded by Graduate Assistant, Kimmi Dotseth, for research purposes.

After each class taught by Parker and Ressler, the collaborative team (i.e. Montavon, Parker, Ressler, Dotseth) meets to reflect and discuss changes to further enhance student learning. Montavon then re-teaches the lesson to all of her classes the following day (with modifications according to grade level that still maintain the integrity of the instructional model) and the cycle continues. In effect, this process is daily professional development for all involved in the collaboration.

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**CRMS SPORT EDUCATION FAIR PLAY CONTRACT**

**THE HAND OF FAIR PLAY**

1. **Safety**
2. **Commitment to let go and move on**
3. **No Put Downs**
4. **Take responsibility, don’t blame**
5. **Agreement to work toward group goals**

A. **Be a good teammate**
B. **Full and appropriate participation**
C. **Win and lose with grace**
This semester, the Professional Development relationship has resulted in a state level presentation, an accepted proposal for a national conference in February and two successful grant applications to support equipment for physical education at CRMS. The first grant was awarded from the DeKalb Education Foundation which provided funding for ABL equipment. The second grant came from the Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance to provide fitness equipment.

The accompanying images illustrate some of the materials created for the instructional units. One is The Hand of Fair Play introduced during the ABL unit and carried on throughout all of the other units. The second slide includes material created for the Sport Education soccer unit in which we integrated cross curricula content by having students research a country from the last World Cup Championship.

The planning and implementation of this professional development relationship between CRMS and NIU in physical education continues to be made possible through the generosity of time, funds, and support from District 428, CRMS Teachers and Administration, the NIU Partnership Office, the University Office of Teacher Certification, and, KNPE chair Paul Carpenter.
DHS Educators Club Members Visit the College of Education

By LaMetra Curry, Coordinator of Recruitment, NIU—The students from the DeKalb High School’s, BRAND NEW Future Educators Club, engaged in an amazing partnership with the College of Education at NIU. On Thursday, October 18th, 2012, eighteen DHS students who are enrolled in Courses: Parenting/Child Development & Child Care Occupations/Alphabitty Learning Center visited the campus. The students are all interested in a career as a teacher.

As the recruiter for the College of Education, and who is also the instructor for the course EDU 101 let the group through their day. The course’s content is “Cultural Competency in Education” and is taught as a Themed Learning Community course that is offered to NIU education majors. Twenty-five of the NIU students participated. These students are in the College of Education Future Teachers Club.

The day included a full agenda. Activities included a welcome by the NIU students to the group, introductions, ice breakers, a walking tour of the campus, lunch in the Black Hawk room, and a classroom project. The DHS students had a great time. They loved the activities and they loved being able to eat lunch on the campus.

National Association for Professional Development School Conference

The theme of this year’s conference is Back to the Basics: Examining the Unique Contributions of Professional Development Schools. The conference will be held in New Orleans, LA. It is scheduled for February 14—17, 2013.

NIU and its PDS partners have had seven presentations accepted for the conference with a total of 17 presenters. In addition, other members from NIU and the districts are attending the conference to learn more about PDSs. The teams are comprised of NIU faculty and staff and the faculty and staff from the partner districts. The following are the presentations:


**Getting the Buy-In: Development to Implementation.** John Burkey, Jessica Lombard, Alice Stech, and Tris Ottolino.

**Pre-Service Teacher Perceptions of One-to-One iPad Integration Capabilities.** Lisa Chinn, Connie Unger, and Cindy York.

**Developing and Using E-Learning to Enhance Cooperating Teacher Effectiveness.** Portia Downey, Sharon Smaldino, and Tris Ottolino.

**Middle School Physical Education and Teacher Preparation: Reflection on Collaborative Daily Professional Development.** Jenny Parker, Jen Montavon, and Jim Ressler.

**Collaborative PDS Involvement in the 21st Century Classroom.** Marti McCloud, Lisa McMorris, and Tris Ottolino.

**Improving Literacy-Based Instructional Practices through Action Research Projects.** Portia Downey and David Walker.
edcamp Northern Illinois
free conference for teachers, administrators, NIU faculty, and teacher candidates
Harter Middle School, Sugar Grove, IL
April 20, 2013, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

On April 20, 2013 Northern Illinois University and Kaneland District 302 will host an education conference like no other -- edcamp Northern Illinois!

Who's invited?
All educators and teacher candidates who work with NIU's professional development schools (PDS) and other partnership schools

What's happening?
Expect discussions, demos, and interactions between participants rather than groups listening to a keynoter. edcamp Northern Illinois is the place to share new classroom tools, ideas, and strategies; action research findings; and discussion of hot topics in education, especially for PDS sites.

How does edcamp work?
Participants will organize themselves on the morning of April 20 with the help of edcamp hosts. They will allocate time to gather informally to share ideas as well as to attend a variety of sessions led by their colleagues and fellow educators. Presenters and note-taking participants will be able to post their session materials immediately to the edcamp Northern Illinois site. If you have an idea for a presentation, simply go to the day's schedule at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AlX2z24kQu8KdHNGLTctVWY5ajNDZF92YVdCOFk4dnc and sign up for a time. That's it. No proposal, no hassle.

What does edcamp cost?
edcamp Northern Illinois is completely free to participants. Sponsors will provide refreshments and other amenities.

How do I register?
Registration information will be made available very soon.

Questions? Contact Tris Ottolino (tottolino@niu.edu) or Kristin Brynteson (krynteson@niu.edu).
Follow #edcampNI on Twitter for up-to-date announcements.