

The Partnership Reader Survey

Tell us what you think! Win a prize! We want to make *The Partnership Reader* more useful and interesting, but we need your help. Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below. All completed surveys will be entered into a drawing for gift certificates. Be sure to include your name and phone number.

- 1) Who are you?
- Parent/Guardian School Teacher/Staff
- Temple University Staff Other _____

- 2) How much of *The Partnership Reader* do you typically read?
- Most/All Skim Headlines/Look at Graphics
- Very Little/None

3) Indicate how interested you are in the following topics:

	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NOT AT ALL
a Partnership News	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Individual School News	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c School Personnel Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d Parent Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e Student Success Stories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Testing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h Child Development and Parenting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i How to Help Your Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j Calendar (events, testing, holidays)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 4) Are there other topics you would like to see in *The Partnership Reader*? Please explain.
- _____
- _____

- 5) Do you have an idea for an item? Tell us the topic and any details, then give us the name and telephone number of a contact person.
- _____
- _____

- 6) Are you interested in working as a volunteer at one of the Partnership schools? If so, which one?
- _____

For the drawing: _____

NAME PHONE

Please fax survey to 215-204-7015 or return in the provided envelope to:
 Editor, *The Partnership Reader*
 Temple University
 2nd Floor, 1509 Cecil B. Moore Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19121

To Support Our Future

You can support the work of the Temple University Partnership Schools with a tax-deductible monetary or in-kind contribution. For information, please contact

Walter E. Jordan-Davis,
 Director of Planning and Development
 (walter.jordan-davis@temple.edu)
 215-204-7013

- Gifts are welcomed in any amount. Suggested areas of support include:
- Annual Fund
 - Literacy Fund
 - Mathematics Fund
 - Professional Development funds
 - General operations within the schools
 - Books to support the literacy effort

A donation of:
\$25 will buy art or instructional supplies for a teacher
\$50 will buy math tools for a class
\$100 will buy guided reading books for an entire class
\$200 will provide transportation to an enrichment event
\$500 will cover a professional development seminar for literacy instruction

To make a gift, please complete this form and enclose it with a check payable to Temple University in the envelope provided. Thank you.

- Enclosed is my check, payable to Temple University

Please charge \$ _____ to my
 Visa MasterCard American Express

CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

For Our Records:

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION _____

PHONE NUMBER (DAY) _____ (EVENING) _____

EMAIL _____



Office of Partnership Schools
 1509 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, 2nd Floor
 Philadelphia PA 19121

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Philadelphia, PA
 Permit No. 1044

Partnership Reader

A newsletter for the Temple University Partnership Schools and Community

vol. 3 issue 2 March 2005

From the Partnership Director...

Spring: Test Season

Just as it is for gardeners, spring is a season of work and waiting for educators. This is when we administer the PSSA to 3rd, 5th and 8th graders, and the TerraNova to 1st through 8th graders. It is a time to see how the knowledge we have planted throughout the fall and winter has taken root, when we measure learning, and decide how to encourage further growth. Spring is a period of hard work for teachers and students as they prepare for tests, followed by anxious anticipation as they await the results.

Here's something our students may not realize: everybody has to take tests, even adults who are not in school anymore. For adults and kids, tests are not always fun – but they are necessary. They tell us where we are doing well and where we need to improve. They give us a chance to apply our skills in challenging situations. They help us plan for the future. That's why we should prepare as well as we can. For students taking the PSSA and the TerraNova, that means studying hard, getting enough rest (eight hours of sleep on most nights), eating balanced meals (especially a breakfast that includes meat, milk or eggs on the morning of the test), then going to school and giving it your all.

Though testing isn't always fun, learning should be. So, even though we are in test season, students should try not to worry about these important tests, even while you work hard to get ready for them. Instead, focus on all of the ways you can enjoy learning: reading books, writing about the world, mastering math and joining in arts programs like ceramics, music, theater and dance. And when test time comes, just do your very best.

John K. DiPaolo
 Executive Director for Partnership Schools

THE ARTISTS ARE COMING

Knight Grant Funds Art for Middle Grades

Listen carefully and hear the creativity. This spring, Partnership classrooms resound with the sounds of clay being shaped, instruments being plucked, and dialogue being rehearsed.

Thanks to the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and three community-minded Philadelphia arts groups, students at Duckrey, Dunbar, Ferguson and Meade are learning about ceramics, music and theater from professional artists. Using individual grants totaling about \$435,000 over three years, The Clay Studio, Strings for Schools and Philadelphia Young Playwrights are collaborating on *Exploring Ourselves and Our Cultures*, a multimedia introduction to the arts for fifth through eighth graders.

The programs will continue during the school year for the next three years.

Bringing Art to Underserved Areas

The grants grew out of the Knight Foundation's desire to increase access to the

arts in underserved communities across the United States. The foundation approached groups across the country for proposals, including The Clay Studio, and Executive Director Amy Sarnier Williams contacted Meade Principal Frank Murphy. "Meade has been working with The Clay Studio for several years," Mr. Murphy explains, "and the two of us came to the conclusion of, 'Why don't we just work with the Partnership Schools?'"

Using Art to Explore Self, Community

"We wanted the project to be directed toward middle school-age students," explains Ms. Williams. "We want to spark journeys of self-discovery, creating and sharing art to explore neighborhood culture and community building."

"The work of the arts groups will help kids in our middle grades explore who they

continued on page 4



In January, Temple University's Fox School of Business and Management presented a book to each Partnership student in honor of James Nevels, Chairman of the Philadelphia School Reform Commission. The gift was part of a 22,000-book donation made to the School District of Philadelphia by the Fox College Council and Alumni Association. With Partnership students and representatives of the Fox College Council are: Fox School Dean M. Moshe Porat, (top row, third from left), Mr. Nevels, Dunbar Principal Judith Simkins, and Partnership Executive Director John DiPaolo, (top row, left to right from banner).

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

TEMPLE PARTNERSHIP 4TH AND 5TH GRADE FIELD DAY & PARADE

What: A Celebration Of Readers, Writers, Athletes and School Spirit
 The Office of Partnership Schools will hold its first annual 4th and 5th Grade Field Day and Parade to celebrate the success of the Partnership Literacy Program.

Why: To Recognize Achievement
 To recognize 4th and 5th grade "three-a-day" readers.

Who: 4th And 5th Grade Students
 All 4th and 5th grade "three-a-day" readers (see your teacher for details) can participate. Parents, teachers and staff are cordially invited to come together to cheer the accomplishments of the Partnership family.

When: Friday, April 22, 2005
Where: Temple University Athletic Complex
For More Information: Richard Mensah, Operations Coordinator
 Office of Partnership Schools
 rmensah@temple.edu
 215-204-3773

SEE YOU THERE!



News Service Cites Partnership Success

The Temple Partnership was cited as an example of successful school reform in a December article that appeared on the Reuters, CNN and Yahoo websites.

Published by Reuters, the international news service, the article relates the experience of Duckrey Elementary student Melissa Cosby, whose reading level improved more than one grade level in a single year. In part, it said:

“At the Duckrey School, in a poor district where almost 90 percent of the 444 students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, there are clear signs of progress. Since Temple University took over the school, the number of students reading at

grade level has risen to 23 percent from 3 percent in 2002; in math, that number has jumped to 17 percent from 2 percent...

“Duckrey Principal Ruth Anderson boasts that the school is no longer on the state’s ‘needs improvement’ list. She has more books, a literacy coach, and resources to get her staff up to speed with the new programs.”

“It’s a nice reflection on the excellent work of staff in the schools and on Temple’s ability to support them,” notes John DiPaolo, Executive Director for Partnership Schools, who attributes the Partnership’s success to the fact that it supports the School District of

Philadelphia by managing a small group of schools pursuing a common reform plan. Mr. DiPaolo says the Partnership’s size also allows the schools to pay close attention to individual needs. The Reuters article cited widespread interest in the potential of this approach:

“Two academic years after Pennsylvania took over the failing Philadelphia school system and made the controversial move to contract out management of about one-sixth of its schools, test scores are up and class sizes are down. The district plans to expand private-sector involvement and is closely watched by U.S. educators as the leader in inner-city reform.”

Artist: Paper Beads,
Sierra Davis
Tanner Duckrey School

Shaking up Shakespeare

Hamlet was just a guy with mother problems, and Juliet was a girl whose boyfriend killed her cousin and started a family feud. Not so different from the people you might see on one of those talk shows where people scream, cry and brandish chairs in anger.

Today’s Chair, Yesterday’s Sword

According to the creators of *Shakespeare Live*, William Shakespeare was the Jerry Springer of his day, putting people and their problems on display and taking the audience into his confidence as he did so. Presented in mid-January at Meade, Ferguson, Elverson and Duckrey schools, *Shakespeare Live* introduced characters from Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Hamlet* in the setting of a modern-day talk show, with hosts interviewing the guests, refereeing arguments that at least once resulted in swordplay, and soliciting opinions from the audience.

“We wanted to make Shakespeare very accessible,” explains David Ingram, Assistant Professor of Theater at Temple University, who created the touring production with Stanton Davis, also an Assistant Professor of Theater, and Ryder Thornton, a graduate of Temple’s masters program in Theater. When you think

about it, Dr. Ingram says, Shakespeare’s plays really are similar to a wild talk show: “There is an intense relationship with the audience and there are confrontations between characters.”

The Audience Gets Into the Act

That is why the creators chose a presentational format, in which the actors, all Temple Theater students made eye contact with the audience and spoke directly to them throughout the performance. “When we acted through them we held their attention incredibly,” he says. “They were very involved. When we finished, at every school the kids said, ‘When are you coming back?’”

A total of 16 performances were given at the four schools, with about 400 students attending. Before the presentations, Temple students conducted workshops to prepare the Partnership students for what they would see, doing improvisations and discussing Shakespeare and his works. Though plans are not set, Dr. Ingram says that *Shakespeare Live* was so well received that he and his collaborators want to make it an annual event, possibly doing a single play next time. In part, that depends on funding, which this year was provided by the Albert Benzwie Memorial Fund.

Temple University’s Partnership Schools Team 215-204-6307

John K. DiPaolo
Executive Director for Partnership Schools

Yemele Ayala-Santiago,
Director of Operations

Tom Gill, Professor (SAF),
College of Education

Walter Jordan-Davis,
Director of Planning and Development
Patricia Albright, Administrative Specialist
Linda Jones, Brodsky Fellows Coordinator
Richard Mensah, Operations Coordinator

Pamela J. Forsythe, Editorial Consultant
Christa Barlow Design/Production
Temple University Office of Publications

Partnership Schools Principals
Ruth Anderson
Tanner Duckrey School

Sheila Drapiewski
Joseph C. Ferguson School

Frank Murphy
General George Meade Elementary School

Bruce Ryan
James Elverson Middle School

Beatrice Mickey
John Wanamaker Middle School

Judith C. Simkins
Paul Laurence Dunbar School

LITERACY SUCCESS STORY

Enthusiasm Breeds Success at Duckrey

Walk into Michelle Tisosky’s classroom at Duckrey Elementary any morning and you will see four clusters of second-graders. One will be gathered around Ms. Tisosky, practicing guided reading, a second group listens as a book is read, a third reads independently, and the fourth discusses a reading. Every half hour or so, the groups rotate, with Ms. Tisosky and her literacy intern Kim Breslin keeping things moving and the students focused.

“It is the happiest time of the day,” says Ms. Tisosky of the literacy block, which in her classroom lasts two-and-a-half hours. “During small-group time with the teacher, their needs are being taken care of, and the kids like the continuity of the routine. They know what we’re doing every day at that time.”

This is the Temple Partnership’s Literacy Framework brought to life: Children reading and writing, being taught at their ability level, with plenty of materials and teachers who know how to help them over the rough spots. “They’re very excited about reading. They talk about ‘Three a Day,’” Ms. Tisosky says, referring to the goal of reading three books a day. “They want to get those books logged in!”

Enthusiastic Teachers, Coaches Key

According to Kathy Campbell, one of the Temple Literacy Coaches at Duckrey, the Framework is just part of what excites the second-graders about reading: “It’s Michelle. Michelle embraces everything we’ve taught her, and she was doing things even before the Framework was put in place.”

Throughout her 12 years as a teacher, Ms. Tisosky has tried to incorporate new ideas into her teaching, but says she was limited by a lack of materials. When she

first heard of the Literacy Framework, she was hopeful, but uncertain.

She found that she not only got concepts to apply, but the necessary material and professional support. “We get new books for guided reading every two weeks, and the kids like that...I liked the coaching...They give you ideas and every step of the way, they walk you through it with your class.” She also appreciates that the Partnership was not afraid to meet children where they were as readers: “I liked the fact that people acknowledged that not all of the children were reading on grade level. That gave you more freedom to work with the kids who were struggling.”

Matching Materials to Ability

As a teacher with 37 years’ experience, Ms. Campbell agrees: “In 30 years I never knew how to get children reading better. I knew how to fix specific skills, for example, if they had trouble with contractions, but I didn’t know how to help them if they couldn’t read – because I was teaching on grade level.”

Dr. Gill believes that giving children grade-level reading materials before they are ready for them is like giving someone a bicycle that is too big – if their feet don’t reach the pedals they can’t ride. And when beginning readers repeatedly fail to read, Ms. Campbell says, “They shut down and get further and further behind.” To avoid this cycle of failure, the Framework carefully assesses children’s skill and places them along an ability scale.

Teacher Courses Provide Development

Just as enthusiastic teachers are essential for the Literacy Framework to succeed, coaches who have plenty of classroom experience are important in ironing out rough spots, and in providing knowledgeable feedback, ongoing encouragement and training.



Ms. Tisosky and student enjoy guided reading.

This spring, the literacy coaches are helping to teach a writing course for Partnership teachers, similar to a reading course that has been offered for the past two years. The course will be free and can be taken for Temple University graduate credit or professional development (Act 48) credit. It will offer specific strategies to help children whose writing level lags behind their reading.

Michelle Tisosky found the reading course useful: “I always heard something I could try the next day in my classroom.” One technique she still uses is the word bank. Each child is given a bag to serve as a container for slips of paper with words he or she recognizes. Words that aren’t recognized are thrown away. “They’ll come up in another reading later on,” says Ms. Tisosky. The bags soon fill, a clear measure of progress.

Another technique that Ms. Tisosky likes is re-reading difficult books. “Re-reading is very important. It sounds simple, but we never did that. We just kept moving on to the next book,” she says. Re-reading allows students to conquer a book that was once unreadable, teaching persistence and building confidence.

The Classroom is Where It all Happens

Though she enjoys coaching teachers, Kathy Campbell is itching to get back into the classroom herself. “I miss the

continued on next page

Who They Are, What They’ll Teach

THE CLAY STUDIO is dedicated to the promotion and development of the ceramic arts and the work of new clay artists. It operates a gallery in the Old City section of Philadelphia, and offers artist residencies and studio space in addition to conducting extensive school, educational and outreach programs. In *Exploring Ourselves and Our Cultures*, ceramic artists will teach techniques of working with clay and will help students create pieces, moving through the stages of design, glazing and firing.

STRINGS FOR SCHOOLS’ mission is to inspire lifelong involvement in music and to enlist support for quality music education on the east coast. In the Partnership program, musicians will perform in the schools, then conduct a series of workshops for selected students, during which the students will prepare for a year-end performance with professional musicians. Selected students will also attend professional performances.

PHILADELPHIA YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS seeks to tap the potential of young people and to inspire learning, creativity and self-esteem through playwriting. Teaching artists will help students develop one-act plays from concept through writing, revision and staging. Professional actors will visit, acting what students have written, and plays will be performed at the end of the year in school and at other venues. Students will also have the opportunity to attend performances of Philadelphia Young Playwright works and professional productions.

KNIGHT GRANT

continued from page 1

are and see a bigger picture of their community through the arts,” says Mr. Murphy. “An unexplored life can be a dead life. We want to provide more venues for our kids to think out their lives.”

Conserving Limited Funds

For Partnership students, the grant provides valuable exposure to the arts without diluting their schools’ financial resources. “The Partnership Schools have an intense focus on improving math and reading learning. This takes up most of our resources. But we hear from parents, students and school staff all

Ferguson Gives and Receives

The spirit of giving was alive at Ferguson Elementary this past holiday season, as students extended their generosity to those serving in the armed forces and received gifts from Temple alumni.

The military was the focus of a service project led by teacher Eileen Danton. Third-graders raised \$200 for the USO with a bake sale, and sent cards and letters to service members.

The College of Education Alumni Association Board decided to donate school supplies to Ferguson instead of exchanging gifts among themselves. Working from a wish list that included items from three-ring binders and glue sticks to a DVD player and rhythm band instruments, the board encouraged its members, friends, and those in the community to “Give to Students, Not to Ourselves.” According to project coordinator Fay Stofman Edelson, “This is just the beginning of a six-year plan for our board. The Dunbar School is next on our list.”



Clay Studio at Ferguson Elementary

the time: we want more arts,” says John DiPaolo, Partnership Executive Director. “This grant is a wonderful way to enrich our school programs with more art, music and creative writing.”

Exploring Ourselves and Our Cultures will bring the arts into the community as well. “We need parent partners,” says Mr. Murphy, explaining that volunteers will be essential as the project expands to include community-based arts activities that will enable adults to participate with their children.

Arts Enrich Communities

Most educators agree that arts exposure can inspire understanding among groups, build cohesiveness within communities and enhance learning. “Students who are not good at reading or math may be good at art, and this gives them a success experience and develops their love of learning and of trying new things,” says Ms. Williams. Incorporating art into lessons gives teachers another way to reach students, she says, explaining, “In a class learning about Indians we have made totems, masks and pinch bowls.”

Recently, Frank Murphy attended a play about a working class woman and noted that, given the price of a seat, a person like the woman in the play could not afford to sit in the audience. “Art is becoming more and more inaccessible to low-wage, low-resource communities,” he says. Perhaps *Exploring Ourselves and Our Cultures* will begin to reverse that trend.

LITERACY SUCCESS STORY

continued from page 3

everyday contact with children and I want to apply all I have learned...My children moved [in reading]. You wouldn’t believe what they did,” she recalls, imagining the progress her students could make with what she knows now.

Michelle Tisosky feels that the greatest literacy gains are made in second grade. “At that level, kids are open books to learning. They are more independent than first graders, but they are still enthusiastic about school,” she says.

Despite the increase in reading materials since the Literacy Framework was begun, the women agree that more books are still needed, which is a measure of the Framework’s success – as children read better they read more. So, needing books is the nicest kind of problem to have.