3rd Annual Literacy Essentials Conference

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Conference Chairs
Dr. Cara Mulcahy
Dr. Julia Kara-Soteriou
Welcome

We welcome you to the 2009 Annual Literacy Essentials Conference, the third of what we hope will become a regular conference for you to attend in future years. In keeping with the high caliber of speakers and presenters at our previous annual conferences, we are confident that this year’s conference will be equally stimulating at the intellectual and professional levels. In addition to the major highlight of this conference—our keynote speaker, Dr. David Berliner, we have a range of scholars and practitioners, who will inspire, inform, and engage us through paper presentations, round table, panel discussions, and workshops that cover important research topics, trends and issues that have shaped and continue to inform current classroom practices. We are also happy that you are here to join us in honoring Dr. William Farr for his continuous contributions to literacy education in Connecticut.

In these exciting yet challenging times in education, in general, and in literacy education, in particular, this conference couldn’t be more timely and relevant. We are pleased that you have decided to take this opportunity to re-invigorate your commitment in facilitating all students’ access to literacy learning. We wish you a productive conference. We also encourage you to participate in, or to submit a proposal for, the 4th Annual Literacy Essentials Conference on March 20, 2010. Visit our conference website at www.reading.ccsu.edu.

Enjoy the conference!

Cara Mulcahy & Julia Kara-Soteriou
Conference Chairs
Program Schedule for March 21, 2009

7:30 - 8:45  Ongoing Registration  
Student Center, Alumni Hall Lobby

8:00 - 8:45  Round Table Discussions  
Alumni Hall, Bellin A & B

9:00 - 10:00  Welcome  
Alumni Hall  
Welcome address by Carl Lovitt, Provost, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, CCSU

Presentation of the Advocate for Reading Professionals Award  
to William Farr by Jesse Turner, Professor, Department of Reading & Language Arts

Introduction of the Keynote speaker by  
Betty Sternberg, Superintendent, Greenwich Public Schools

Keynote Address: David Berliner, Arizona State University

10:15 - 11:00  Breakout Sessions I

11:00 - 12:00  Breakout Sessions II

12:00 - 1:00  Lunch (Alumni Hall)

1:10 - 2:00  Breakout Sessions III

2:10 - 3:00  Breakout Sessions IV

SAVE THE DATE!  
MARCH 20, 2010  
4TH LITERACY ESSENTIALS CONFERENCE
Dr. David Berliner
9:00 a.m., Alumni Hall

Dr. Berliner is a Regents’ Professor of Education in the Mary Lou Fulton College of Education at Arizona State University. Dr. Berliner is known for his publications *Collateral Damage: How High-Stakes Testing Corrupts America's Schools* co-authored with Sharon Nichols and *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attack on America’s Public Schools* co-authored with B.J. Biddle. Dr. Berliner has served as president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and of the Educational Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association (APA) and is a member of the National Academy of Education and a Fellow of the Center for Advances Study in the Behavioral Sciences. He has received awards for his distinguished contributions from APA, AERA, and the National Education Association (NEA).
This year's award recipient, Dr. William J. Farr, has been working with students, teachers, parents, and administrators in Connecticut for more than forty years. He started as a classroom teacher and, after 25 years, he transitioned to Language Arts Coordinator and Reading/Language Arts Consultant. He also worked for several years in the Bureau of Curriculum and Instructional Programs of the Connecticut State Department of Education. During the last few years he has been teaching in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut. Dr. Farr is currently a Board Member of the Connecticut Reading Association and the State of Connecticut Coordinator for IRA. In the past, he served as the President of the Connecticut Association for Reading Research and as the Editor of CARReader. Dr. Farr is the recipient of several awards, including Outstanding Educator of the Year (Connecticut Council of Teachers of English), Celebrate Literacy Award (IRA/CRA), Educator of the Year Award (Pi Lambda Theta Honor Society in Education/UConn), and Celebration of Excellence State Award.
**Program Schedule**

**Roundtable Discussions**

8:00 A.M.-8:45 A.M.  
Bellin A & B

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**Promoting Self-Regulated Learning in the Literacy Curriculum**

Judi Randi, University of New Haven, New Haven, CT

This discussion session will focus on classroom curriculum research that demonstrates ways in which teachers provide self-regulatory opportunities and requirements for students through a curriculum-embedded approach for developing students’ self-regulation. At another level, this roundtable aims to describe how teachers understand and apply theories of self-regulation defined by psychological research, in their own work with students. Self-regulated learning is essential for accomplishing literacy tasks. This discussion session should be of interest to classroom teachers who wish to embed strategy instruction within their literature curriculum, establishing for students a need to learn the strategies to succeed at academic tasks.

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**Parental Involvement: The Impact it Has on Reading Achievement in Grades K, 1, & 5**

Heather Mack, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT  
Paula Bordonaro, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

We will have the opportunity to discuss a research project on parental involvement and its impact on reading achievement in kindergarten, first, and fifth grades. The presentation will consist of a PowerPoint presentation, handouts regarding supporting research and our results. Examples of effective parental involvement tasks in relation to literacy will be provided. Through this presentation educators will leave with more possibilities on how to structure homework literacy tasks in the classroom. The goal is to make a stronger connection between the home and school environment.

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**The Impact of Repeated Reading on the Fluency of Struggling Readers**

Paula White, Reading Specialist, Hebron Public Schools, Hebron, CT

The presentation will include a PowerPoint demonstration, poster board, and handouts elucidating the effectiveness of teacher assisted repeated readings on the reading accuracy, rate, and prosody of multi-age struggling readers. Research-based classroom practices to improve students’ reading fluency will be described highlighting readers theater, phrased reading, choral reading, and repeated timed readings along with several ways to assist students in choosing “just right books.”

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**A Unit of Study on our Content Area Writing**

Nancy Richards, East Haddam Elementary School, East Haddam, CT

We will demonstrate the pedagogy and best practices used for your writers to form a general understanding of content text, use details to explain important facts, construct an interpretation and/or explanation of the text, and connect the text to outside knowledge. The presentation will also share how the reader/writer connects or associates the text with his/her own life, other texts, or knowledge of the world.

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**Transformative Education**

Barbara Clark, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT  
Joss French, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

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**Special Poster Session: Showcase of a School that Works**

Ross Herrick, Principal, T.W. Mahan Elementary School, Norwich, CT
Central Connecticut Writing Project: An Open Forum
Jennifer Amalfa, New Britain Public Schools, New Britain, CT
Laura Angliss, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Winnie Peeler, Wallingford Public Schools, Wallingford, CT

This round table will discuss the ongoing development and growth of the Central Connecticut Writing Project, writing project activities, and professional opportunities for teachers and young writers.

Breakout Sessions I 10:15 A.M.-11:00 A.M.

Transmediated Learning and Multicultural Literature  
Sprague
Jane M. Gangi. Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY
Mary Ann Reilly, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY

The purpose of this workshop is to establish the research on both transmediated learning and the status of multicultural literature, and to share with participants high leverage practices that benefit children, and particularly children of color.

A Storytelling Journey  
Carlton Room
Emily Chasse, Burritt Library, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

Learning to tell tales takes time, guidance, and much practice but this workshop will present an overview of storytelling so participants can experience the excitement that storytelling can bring. The workshop will weave stories of many types, from different countries to display a wealth of material, explore ways we bring stories into our lives and careers, and discuss the ways youth and adults benefit from storytelling. I will demonstrate techniques of presenting stories to young people, lead participants in various activities to get them started on a storytelling journey, and give helpful hints on story mapping, story cards, games, and other techniques as ways to learn stories without memorization.

Wikis, Blogs, Undergraduates, Fourth Graders, and Reading Education  
1849 Room
Jim Johnston, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Diana Gascon, Hebron Elementary School, Hebron, CT

This presentation explores the use of blogs and wikis in conjunction with a fourth grade reading class. In this project, the fourth grade class was divided into literature circle reading groups for on line discussion of their books through the use of a blog. Each of these discussion groups was facilitated by an undergraduate education student. When the blogs and books were complete, we then turned to a written reaction to the books as they relate to friendship. Again the fourth graders did the writing in the wikis for each of the groups with minor coaching from the undergrad students.

Working with Words  
Blue & White Room
Jennifer H. Jones, Coventry Grammar School, Coventry, CT
Jennifer Brodeur, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

In this workshop, the participants will learn about current research and best practices for phonics instruction. A philosophy of how to include phonics into a balanced reading program will be presented. Mini-lessons will be demonstrated on word building, word sorting, and using rhymes and poems to teach word families. Online games and reading centers will be shown to reinforce patterns taught. The participants will be provided with additional suggestions for professional books to read to further their word study knowledge.
SUPERINTENDENT PANEL

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM
PHILBRICK ROOM

Chair: Daniel G. Mulcahy, Professor, Central Connecticut State University
David Berliner, Regents’ Professor, Arizona State University
Joseph Erardi, Superintendent, Southington Public Schools
Doris Kurtz, Superintendent, New Britain Public Schools
Marion H. Martinez, Associate Commissioner of Education of the Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership
Anthony Rigazio-Digilio, Chair, Educational Leadership, CCSU
Betty Sternberg, Superintendent, Greenwich Public Schools
Philip Streifer, Superintendent, Bristol Public Schools

A panel of superintendents in Connecticut responds to the Keynote presentation and share their perspectives on schools that work, their challenges, and vision for the future.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS II

Reading and Writing the Image
Kris Nystrom, Chair, Coginchaus Regional High School, Durham, CT

We will review the theoretical underpinnings of sign receptivity and expression, second, we will explore the application of the process model on visual and then textual modes; and third, we will draw parallels between the model and analytical writing. The presentation will include images from contemporary advertising, historically located artwork, and poetry and prose writing.

Unpacking the Text: Examining Author’s Craft and Producing a Look-Alike Text
Marie Truscinski, Reading Consultant, Wethersfield Public Schools, CT

This presentation demonstrates how students learn about author’s craft by examining two poems. The purpose of this activity is to show students how to learn to “read like a writer.” Once students have identified literary techniques employed by the author and identified possible purposes for using the techniques, students will compose an original poem in the style of the author. The text chosen to demonstrate this teaching activity is “Joyful Noise” by Paul Fleischman.

Prioritizing Poetry in 21st Century Classrooms: Using Technology to Enhance Reading
Greg McVerry, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Sue Ringler-Pet, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

How can we situate poetry as an integral part of literacy programs while pressures to incorporate new technologies seem paramount? This presentation details successful efforts to develop 21st-century classroom poetry activities. Learn how students use multimedia technology and the Internet to enhance response to poetry and to compose poetic texts.

Literacy in the Age of High-Stakes Testing
David Berliner, Regents’ Professor, Arizona State University

This year’s Keynote speaker discusses, in depth, key aspects of his keynote presentation.
**Unmasking Teaching and Learning: A Mind Without Fear – Authentic Voices for Literacy**
Barbara Clark, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Joss French, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

The purpose of this panel discussion is to illuminate prominent issues in pre-service teacher preparation and teacher retention. The panel focuses on using the language arts as a vehicle to express the pre-service teachers’ beliefs through a variety of symbolic expressions. The panel also addresses teaching professionals and the issues they face in high stakes testing climates. The presentation concludes with a consideration of possible solutions to develop transformative learning communities that hold the potential to foster greater retention for pre-service and in-service teachers. Panel discussants will include pre-service teacher candidates, teaching professionals, and university professors in teacher education.

**Transformative Collaboration Among Teachers of Literacy**
Bill Farr, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

A special presentation by this year’s winner of the Advocate for Reading Professionals Award. This session presents a post modern, ethnographic qualitative study of several literacy teams in an elementary school. The study focuses upon an explanation of the descriptors of a successful collaborative process, how collaboration differs from teaming, and probes the decision making processes of a collaborative team as they work to transform literacy instruction for their students.

**Effective Research-Based Lessons for Teaching Critical Decoding Skills**
Thomas Gunning, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

This session will present five research-based lessons for teaching key decoding skills that pose problems for struggling readers. Lessons include using articulation and letter formation to foster letter-sound learning, using phonics to teach high-frequency words, coping with clusters, contrasting words, such as plan and plane to develop the concept of final e as a long-vowel marker, and teaching neglected strategies for independently attacking challenging words.

**Visual Thinking Strategies to Build Comprehensive Literacy in Grades 6-12**
Sue Schmidt, Roosevelt Middle School, New Britain, CT
Betty Murratti, Roosevelt Middle School, New Britain, CT
Joanna Najarian-Garb, Valley Regional High School

This workshop, aimed at middle and high school teachers, will begin by taking participants through a Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) lesson. VTS emphasizes discussions, individual thinking, and supporting one’s own opinions with visual cues in the picture. Once participants have learned about VTS, they will then begin two additional interactive sessions connecting other forms of visual literacy to poetry analysis and to reading text. Participants will view pictures which connect to poetry and look at how the skills involved in analyzing a piece of art connect to the skills of analyzing poetry using writing and discourse. Finally, in small groups, participants will look at the pictures and use the pictures as inspiration for creating various pieces of writing.

**Red Birds, Blue Birds and Response to Intervention**
William R. Nelson, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Jesse P. Turner, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Joan Nicoll-Senft, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT
Mariann Rossi-Ondusky, Principal, Rushford Center, Durham, CT

The panel will discuss how literacy instruction is being transformed by the research-proven instructional methods and individualized progress monitoring challenges that are the result of the Response to Intervention (RTI) initiatives that are occurring across our country. The key features of RTI will be one focus of the panel’s discourse. A second focus will be the key skills central to reading achievement as defined in 2000 by the National Reading Panel. Examples of curriculum based measures focused upon key skills central to reading achievement will be reviewed, avenues for identifying high quality scientifically research-based reading curriculums will be provided, and approaches to and examples of progress monitoring and data collection strategies will be discussed.
**BREAKOUT SESSIONS IV**

**Using Cyberlessons to Enhance Reader Response**
**Sprague**
Diana C. Gascon, Hebron Elementary School, Hebron, CT

Participants will see an example of a Cyberlesson based on the graphic novel *The Arrival* that can be implemented for classroom use. Participants will also be able to view other literacy activities that incorporate the New Literacies that can be used in the classroom for reading response (electronic scrapbooks, online bookblogs, Internet inquiries).

**Measuring Students’ Growth in Reading Easily and Appropriately K-12**
**Carlton**
Jacob Werblow, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

This interactive workshop will give attendees basic knowledge and hands-on experience of some of our nation's latest and most rigorously developed reading assessments. Specifically, this workshop will: (a) clarify the difference between achievement and learning gain, (b) introduce the concepts of curriculum-based measurement and progress monitoring, and (c) demonstrate how to easily and appropriately measure student achievement and learning gain of reading comprehension, k-12. These assessments are developed by the University of Oregon and funded by the U.S. Department of Education, and are therefore absolutely free!

**Constructing Text Together: Synthesis and Internet Inquiry**
**1849 Room**
Greg McVerry, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Ian O’Byrne, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

This session will examine the cognitive processes and social practices involved in the synthesis and construction of online texts during Internet Inquiry. The presenters will share results from recent research, and offer concrete learning activities for the classroom.

**Literacy Instruction Through Collaborative Eyes**
**Blue & White**
Jessica Buckle, Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, CT

The focus of this workshop is to demonstrate and analyze the ways literacy teachers can work collaboratively together to improve their practice and, ultimately, student achievement. Teachers will investigate different models of teaming and synthesize how positive peer relationships can promote an atmosphere of efficacy school wide. In this interactive workshop, participants will examine videos of teacher collaboration, analyze a variety of methods and protocols that promote teacher learning, and reflect on their own comfort level and professional shared responsibility to improve student achievement.

**Home/School Connections: Family Writing Kits**
**Philbrick**
Linda Nettleton, Bristol Public Schools, Bristol, CT

This activity is for teachers who are looking for a way to involve families in the reading AND writing process. Family Writing Kits are a take-home activity that encourages the home/school connection while fostering writing skills. Through the use of mentor texts, planning webs, effective writing strategies, web sites, publishing materials, and extensions activities, students have the opportunity to educate their family on the writing process.
4TH LITERACY ESSENTIALS CONFERENCE
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY - SPRING 2010

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Deadlines for proposals will be made know on the conference website.
Please use the link located at: www.reading.ccsu.edu

The Literacy Essentials Conference is open to individuals who are interested in advancing research, curriculum and pedagogy in areas of reading and language arts. Researchers, educators, administrators, and other interested individuals are invited to submit proposals for presentation at the 4th Literacy Essentials Conference.

Please visit our conference web page for information regarding guidelines for submission.

Conference Chairs:
Julia Kara-Soteriou and Cathy Kurkjian

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
THE LITERACY ADVOCACY AWARD

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

This award recognizes individuals and/or organizations who have, through their advocacy, made significant literacy contributions in the Greater Connecticut area. Contributions may be in the areas of professional service, teaching, research, writing, and policy development, with respect to literacy education. The award is presented annually at the Literacy Essentials Conference.

Information on criteria and nomination process are available at our conference web page: www.reading.ccsu.edu
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Citizens Bank
Central Connecticut Writing Project
Continuing Education and Community Engagement
Department of Educational Leadership
Department of Reading & Language Arts
School of Education & Professional Studies
Central Connecticut State University Graduate Society of Reading
Alpha Upsilon Alpha Beta Kappa, Honor Society of IRA
Phi Delta Kappa
CCSU Bookstore
Pearson, Allyn and Bacon