

A Blast From the Past - Middle Road

Elementary School Legacy Project Spring 2016

During spring 2016, four teacher candidates at the Middle Road Elementary School in the Hazlet, NJ school district instituted a Legacy Project entitled "A Blast from the Past." The project involved all grade level students at the Middle Road Elementary School as well as eight senior citizens from the Arnold Walter Nursing Home in Hazlet, NJ. The Arnold Walter senior citizens held discussions on past history or read books to the Middle Road students. Third graders created How-To Guides for technology for the senior citizens and shared the guide books with fourth graders. Four senior citizens visited each of these classes and the students showed them how to: use email, Google search, use an iPad, smart phone, and/or a laptop. Centers were set up and the senior citizens rotated to each of these topic areas. The project promoted respect for elders, giving back to the community, education on the past, and allowed students the opportunity to show initiative in teaching senior citizens about technology. The project also fostered a connection between Monmouth University, the Hazlet School District, and the Arnold Walter Senior Living Center in Hazlet.

Book Worm Reading Challenge

The Book Worm Reading Challenge was a school-wide program that promoted literacy within the student population at the Middle Road Professional Development School in the Hazlet School District during fall 2015. In this legacy project organized by School of Education Fall 2015 teacher candidates, the elementary school students worked toward setting personal goals and achieving a school wide goal of reading 20,000 pages. The objectives of the program included reading for pleasure, improving reading skills, increasing love of reading, motivating students to achieve a goal and student collaboration. 40,759 was the total number of pages read by the students in the school. This far exceeded the original goal.

Kids for Conservation Pollinator Project

In November of 2015, Monmouth University School of Education was contacted by board members of the Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF). The goal of the partnership was to develop a new curriculum that would focus on teaching preschoolers about the importance of pollination. The Pollination Project is an outgrowth of the Kids for Conservation Project, which is affiliated with the Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF). Monmouth University undergraduate students who are seeking their Preschool – 3rd grade early childhood endorsement partnered with the MCF in order to create a curriculum unit for preschool students. These institutions were able to enhance student learning on a vital part of the science curriculum, provide a rich clinical experience for pre-service teachers, and to familiarize practicing teachers with a more constructivist approach to pre-school science instruction.

The MU students worked in both their partnership schools as well as schools chosen by the MCF. The lessons were met by much success in all of the schools. The early childhood students

became proud pollination experts and agents of conservation, the pre-service teachers developed a greater self-efficacy in their teaching in STEAM subjects, and the cooperating teachers reported being, “quite surprised by the depth of wonder and questioning that many of their children brought to the unit.” While this project was just completed, there is a possibility of another project with MCF in the near future.

Pet Adoption Stories: Project-Based Learning and Its Implications for Fictional Writing Among Elementary students

Students at Wanamassa Elementary in the Ocean School District write stories for adoptable animals at the Monmouth County SPCA. The stories are then collected and kept with the adoptable animals at the SPCA. When the animals are adopted, the stories the elementary students wrote for the animal goes with the family that adopts the animal.

Practicum Partnership with Long Branch

The project for spring 2016 was to partner the students from the Methods Course (EDS 352) with faculty from the Gregory School with the goal of improving reading scores. The initial meeting was held between the District Reading Specialist, the Principal, and Professor Brennan. Plans were developed and the program began in February 2016. The students were given an orientation on the scholastic approach used in each classroom by the District Reading Specialist. Each student was assigned a classroom. Professor Brennan was also in the school during the practicum which was held each Tuesday from 7:50 a.m. to 9:50 a.m. Professor Brennan visited each student and observed them during their field work and then individually conferenced with each one discussing each candidate’s strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. In the future, the results will be reviewed to determine the impact of their presence on reading performance. This project occurred again in spring 2017.

Buddy and Me with Amerigo A. Anastasia Elementary School, Long Branch

The Buddy and Me program consists of students in EDL 201 serving as literacy mentors in the Buddy and Me program for at-risk readers, grades 1-5. EPP students use the Moby Max computer, reading program to support literacy growth. The district expectantly desires to have the Monmouth University students participate in expanding the Buddy and Me program across the district.

Project S.E.A.L. with Asbury Park High School

Project S.E.A.L (Securing Educational Partnerships and Alliances) is a partnership between Dr. Estudillo’s Educational Psychology class and the Asbury Park High School’s Dream Academy. The Dream Academy is an early high school to college bridge program in which students are dual enrolled at Brookdale Community College and APHS. The students will earn their Associate’s Degree while simultaneously earning their HS diploma.)MU School of Education students have had the opportunity to work with this talented group of HS students in a variety of

cooperative learning and immersive activities ranging from breakout sessions on college transitioning, goal setting, mentoring, and problem-based learning. As of 2017-2018, the Dream Academy has two cohorts of students in the 9th and 10th grades, with an additional cohort anticipated to enter this coming fall 2018—increasing APHS’s program to a total of approximately 60 Dream Academy students.