Annual Inquiries, Investigations, and Innovations 2012-13

Supporting Teacher Learning in a New Space

As P.K. Yonge elementary teachers began working in the newly-designed architectural space this year, traditional ways of teaching have been called into question; professional development has played a large role helping teachers make sense of using this new space and approach to teaching. As the curriculum coordinators and a university partner, we engaged in practitioner inquiry to study the ways in which we mediated and supported teaching and learning in a new environment that uses space differently.

Ashley Hill
Marisa Stukey
Rachel Wolkenhauer

Using iPad Technology to Accelerate Learning of Fundamental Mathematical Skills

The purpose of this inquiry was to investigate the impact of iPad technologies among a group of struggling 7th grade math learners. Four students lacking foundational skills required to learn 7th grade math were identified. These students were provided with iPads during differentiated instruction that allowed them to review, revise, process and solve specific problems related to the missing math skills. Pre and post-tests, and teacher observations reveal an increase in students' understanding. In addition the students were more engaged in class activities and remained focused for longer periods of time. Findings reveal that this iPad implementation greatly facilitates differentiated instruction in math lessons.

George Pringle
Carrie Litchfield

Carnegie and Blended Learning, Taking Students to the Next Level

Carnegie and blended learning have become a daily part of my Algebra 1 instruction. Carnegie is dreaded by students, but praised by them after the End of Course Test as the best review source around. Purlieu (Moodle) is seen as one of the things you have to do before each test. Looking at the pros and cons of both tools, does the data show that the tools helped to improve student learning?

Alicia Stephenson

Milkshakes and Math

Teacher collaboration is essential to facilitate the design, implementation, and reflection aspects of the third grade math curriculum. This inquiry focused on providing support for all learners: from re-teaching previous skills to enrichment.
Lindsey Pavlik Ammons
Ross Van Boven

Using Apps to Improve Tier 3 Students' Math Performance

Tier 3 students sometimes lack self-confidence and motivation, which may make it difficult to engage them in learning. One particular student led me on a quest to find resources that would not only increase self-confidence, motivation, and engagement, but also help diagnose specific areas for improvement in math. It worked so well that we moved more Tier 3 students into this model.
Elizabeth Jacobbe

Sailing for Adventure: Is it a Pirate's Life for You?

Explore the Learning Design Collaborative framework for Common Core Standards implementation as we share our interdisciplinary unit on the morality of piracy.
Tim Hayes
Greg Cunningham

Understanding Self-regulated Learning for Students Receiving Tier 3 Instructional Supports in Reading

This session will describe an inquiry conducted in the 4th and 5th grade Tier 3 reading group during the 2012-2013 school year. Each day students engaged in a self-regulated learning cycle while focusing on the flexible use of comprehension strategies in content area text. The iPad was the main instructional material used.
Ashley Hill

The Language of Power: Language, Power, and Cultural Capital

Explore the Learning Design Collaborative framework for Common Core Standards implementation as we share our interdisciplinary unit on language and its connection to power and cultural capital.

Jennifer Cheveallier
Shannon Leontiades

Taking Action with Assessment for Learning in Biology

In what ways has moving to a more blended learning environment allowed for ongoing assessment for learning, implementation of differentiated instruction, and preparation for the Biology End of Course exam? We will share our ongoing inquiry in blending instruction/learning in Biology by focusing on how we utilize student assessment to inform teaching practice. In particular we will examine how we have moved toward a more standards-based assessment system and its effect on student achievement.

Mickey MacDonald
Tanya Kort

Using Mentoring and Coaching Strategies to Support Meaningful Change in the Work Ethic of Three Students

Elective teachers stand in a unique position of having students for multiple years often building strong trusting relationships. Elective teachers can be utilized to support the classroom teacher and mentor students by building relationships to change students' work habits.
Melanie Harris

Helping Students Take Action with Assessment for Learning

This past year, I have been focusing on finding ways to move toward a more blended learning environment to allow for ongoing assessment for learning, the implementation of differentiated instruction in my Geometry classroom, and preparing my students for the Geometry End-of-Course Test. I also wanted to determine how these strategies could promote autonomous or self-regulated learning among my students and reduce the achievement gap between my of different ethnicities. I will share how I used student self-assessment of learning targets and formative assessment data to try to teach four struggling students how to reflect on what they know; reflect on what they do not know; and, develop action steps to prepare for assessments.

Kristin Weller

How Does Participation in an Introductory PLTW Engineering Course as Part of the 7th Grade Elective Wheel Change a Student's Ideas About His or Her Future?

Project Lead The Way, PLTW, claims that exposure to STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math), engineering in particular, courses at a younger age has a positive effect on a student's ideas about pursuing a career in STEM in the future. I decided to look at our population of 7th graders to determine if their brief 9 week introduction to engineering has influenced their ideas about their futures.

Kerry Thompson

Somewhere Over the Rainbow: Self-Reflection in the Early Childhood Classroom

This presentation will focus on how we have guided students to set goals, self-reflect, and use rubrics in the K-1 learning community. We will discuss how we began the year by using weather metaphors to help students reflect on behavior, then slowly transitioned to having students apply this to academic goals.

Chelsea Ebert Downes
Michele Krank

The Blended Learning Community - "What do the students have to say?" - "How has this impacted my teaching?"

In my pursuit to create a student-centered blended learning environment I have looked to my Creative Photography students to provide feedback on how my course is presented. Last summer I completed the first nine-week unit of study in Purlieu (Moodle) and immersed our class into the Blended Learning Environment. Come hear what my students had to say about the online learning environment. Join in the conversation about how this has changed the manner in which I present content and teach the course.

Susan Johnson

Are Our P.K. Students Prepared for Calculus in College?

The simple answer to this question is "No" but the more difficult question is: What do we need to do differently? This inquiry focused on what was required to be successful in calculus in college, where the gaps are, and what I could do to fill those gaps. I will share the current situation at P. K. Yonge, what I will do to better prepare my students, and open the discussion up to get other ideas that will help our students.
Jim Bice

Partnerships for Improving Practice

During a three-year induction program, teachers are partnered for support, mentoring, and coaching as PLP-As. In this session, information will be shared about the structure of the interactions from the mentor teachers' perspectives, the evolving conversations that have arisen during mentor meetings, and ideas for future directions of mentoring and peer evaluations.

Carrie Geiger

Tech It Out!

Interested in using apps to enhance your teaching? Check out ways in which apps can increase parent and student understanding, serve as a medium for checking mastery of a skill, and excite the digitally savvy student about learning. Apps focus on enhancing Math and Reading instruction.
Ashlea Graham

Spanish 2 Moves to Moodle

This year I have been teaching Spanish 2 in a blended learning environment. Using this approach has helped me, and my students, be more organized and have one place where students can find information if they are absent. Moodle also helps students have a place to practice for tests, quizzes, listening, writing and acquiring cultural knowledge of the Hispanic culture.

Grisell Santiago

Does it Work?

This presentation explores the effectiveness of providing struggling math students with double instructional time in Algebra 1. Struggling students received twice the instruction time and math support as other students. How does this affect the academic achievement and high stakes testing success of struggling students compared with their peers in a regular Algebra 1 class?

Paige Allison

Collaboration for All!

This round table discussion focuses on how the Curriculum Coordinators and PDC Site coordinator collaborated to create planning opportunities for the faculty while enhancing the pre-service teacher's experiences. Come and hear how we thought "outside the box" to provide the Learning Communities with common planning time

while simultaneously providing pre-service teachers unique leadership and teaching opportunities.

Renee Simmons