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## THE BEACON

Newsletter of the Western New York Educational Service Council

October 2009

### Fall Reception a Huge Success

For the first time in anyone's memory, practitioners and researchers gathered at the Center for Tomorrow on September 10th to share information and exchange ideas with each other. Twenty-two members of UB's Graduate School of Education Faculty and 27 School Superintendents from the region listened to the research findings of five faculty groups. After some informal networking and a buffet lunch, *Drs. Douglas Clement and Julie Sarama* presented results of their exemplary "Building Blocks of Early Math" research project as well as other associated curricular products. They were followed by *Drs. Lynn Shanahan and Mary K. Thompson*, whose research in "Explicit Strategy Instruction Across the Grades" is ongoing within the Amherst Schools. *Dr. Xiufeng Liu's* work on "Competence in Science Achievement..." explained how opportunities at home and in the whole school augment classroom science learning. Next, *Dr. Abiola DiPeolu* discussed "Post-School Transitions and Students with Disabilities" and encouraged districts to get involved in her research. In the last session, "Integrating Response to Intervention Into Schools: Academic and Behavior Interventions," *Dr. Greg Fabiano* highlighted successful strategies dealing with students who have difficulty learning.



Overall, this September "mixer" for faculty and school leaders initiated serious dialogue, hopefully leading to further interaction, both on campus and in the local school districts. Everyone looks forward to the next opportunity.



The Western New York Educational Service Council is proud of its partnership with the law firm of Hodgson Russ LLP Attorneys. We appreciate their support as our Corporate Sponsor and recognize their outstanding service to the schools of Western New York.

**Visit Our Website: [www.wnyesc.org](http://www.wnyesc.org)**

## **“The Principal Story” told at WNEC**



Nearly 100 participants, including regional school administrators, university faculty and their students, and teacher leaders interested in administration attended this session at the WNEC Studios on September 24th. They were deeply engaged in conversation about the critical importance of school principals in educational reform.

This project was sponsored by the Council, WNEC and the Wallace Foundation, which conducted a decade of research on educational leadership. Those present viewed several video clips from “The Principal Story,” which was broadcast nationwide this past summer. The multimedia presentation and ensuing discussion focused

on the central role of the school principal. Leadership is second only to classroom instruction in contributing to what students learn in school, yet effective instructional leadership is a frequently missing element in the skill set of school building administrators.

Four themes were emphasized: stewardship of a vision, leading instructional improvement, creating the instructional environment and holding people accountable. The video clips highlighted the success of Principal Academies around the country, and specifically, the vision, passion and successful strategies of two principals from Chicago and Springfield, Illinois.

Seven “expert” panelists were present to share their perspectives and answer questions. They included principals, Ms. Jill Pellis (Transit Middle School/Williamsville), Mr. Lawrence Wright (PS 396/South Bronx); Mr. Bob Christmann (Superintendent, Grand Island); Mr. Brian Gould (Board Member, Cheektowaga Central); Dr. Mark Frazier (Lead Community Superintendent, BPS); Dr. Steve Uebbing (Professor of Ed. Admin., Univ. of Rochester); and Dr. Tom Rogers, (Executive Director, NYSCOSS).

Dr. Frazier led a contingent of 30 members from the Buffalo Public Schools, who have all participated in the Buffalo Leadership Academy. He noted that BPS is inviting those who work outside the city to apply to future academy cohorts.

The general feeling of the panel and participants was that successful principals need dynamic training (like that offered in the Academies) and significant support through cohort networking and coaching, especially in their first few years. Strategic planning to recruit, train and support new principals is critical for the future of our schools and is most effective at the local level. Hopefully, there will be funds available through public or private sources, but districts cannot await or depend on such resources.

More can be seen regarding this workshop, either on the Council’s or WNEC’s website in the near future. Many thanks to Council consultant, Kate Rudeiwicz, for her support with the project; and to Dr. John Craig and his staff at WNEC, whose efforts through the Wallace Foundation, made this workshop possible and successful.

### **A BIG THANKS TO BOARD MEMBERS...**

**Bob Christmann and Mark Frazier, for offering their expertise on “The Principal Story” panel.**

**Jeff Rabey, for his work on next year’s Global Citizenship Institute Conference.**

**Lauree Chabe, and her Amherst Staff, for leading the July 20th Workshop.**

## CIDEL is “Calling” All Future Administrators

Is the quality pool of candidates for principals and assistant principals shrinking? Are there teacher leaders in your midst that may have the potential to step into school administration?

The Committee for Identifying and Developing Educational Leaders (CIDEL) recognizes the importance of cultivating future leaders, and for many years has sponsored the “Call To Leadership” forum. Typically, school superintendents and principals nominate teacher leaders with potential to attend a late afternoon/dinner meeting at Salvatore’s Italian Gardens. At the forum, they hear several practicing administrators talk about their career paths, as well as the rewards and challenges of their positions. Table discussions ensue during and after dinner, with facilitators at each table to answer individual questions. This year’s event also includes a keynote address from Dr. Laurel Schmidt, noted author, educator and speaker.

Seize this opportunity and tap a teacher leader to attend this year’s Call to Leadership! Nomination and registration forms can be found on line at:

[http://www.wnyesc.org/docs/09NovCIDEL\\_brochure\\_CTL.pdf](http://www.wnyesc.org/docs/09NovCIDEL_brochure_CTL.pdf)

### CIDEL’s 7th Annual Leadership Academy



Dr. Laurel Schmidt, author of *Gardening in the Minefields* returns to Buffalo as the keynote speaker in this full day workshop at Salvatore’s on Tuesday, November 3rd. “Great Leaders are Power Brokers” is the title and her presentation will focus on the essential skills employed by successful school leaders: setting exemplary vision, motivating others, handling challenging people and problems.

This day is especially designed for all current and future school administrators. For many, Tuesday the 3rd is a Superintendents’ Conference Day, which should allow staff to attend without worrying about leaving school on a student day.

[http://www.wnyesc.org/docs/09NovCIDEL\\_brochure\\_CTL.pdf](http://www.wnyesc.org/docs/09NovCIDEL_brochure_CTL.pdf)

### SAVE OR PASS ALONG THESE DATES

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|------------------|---|
| October 15, 2009 | <b>“Literacy, Leadership and Curriculum Design”</b><br>9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.<br>Millennium Hotel, Galleria Rd., Cheektowaga           |
| November 2, 2009 | <b>CIDEL’s “Call to Leadership” Dinner and Panel</b><br>4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.<br>Salvatore’s Italian Gardens - 6461 Transit Rd. Depew |
| November 3, 2009 | <b>CIDEL’S “Annual Leadership Academy Workshop”</b><br>9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.<br>Salvatore’s Italian Gardens - 6461 Transit Rd. Depew  |

**Thanks to the UB Graduate School of Education**

**The WNYESC recognizes its invaluable partnership with the Graduate School of Education at SUNY Buffalo. The Council deeply appreciates support from Dr. Mary Gresham, Dean of the Graduate School of Education. We also thank the Faculty and Staff for their encouragement and participation in the Council programs and activities.**

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**UPCOMING CALENDAR**

**October**

1st	Unleashing the Power of Instructional Leadership Through Web 2.0 Tech.	8:30 - 3:30 pm	Hilton Garden Rochester
4th - 6th	NYSCOSS Conference		
15th	Building Literacy Framework Wksp	8:30 - 2:30 pm	Millennium
20th	School Site Leadership Study Group	7:45 - 10:00 am	Marriott
21st	New Administrator Series	7:45 - 10:00 am	Millennium
22nd	Executive Leadership Study Group	4:15 - 6:15 pm	Millennium

**November**

2nd	CIDEL Call to Leadership Dinner	4:15 - 6:00pm	Salvatore’s
3rd	CIDEL Leadership Academy	8:30 am - 3:00 pm	Salvatore’s
10th	Legal Issues for School Bldg Admin	7:45 am - Noon	Millennium
18th	New Administrators Series	7:45 - 10:00 am	Millennium
19th	Executive Leadership Study Group	7:45 - 9:30 am	Millennium

**December**

1st	School Site Leadership Study Group	4:00 - 6:30 pm	Marriott
9th	New Administrator Series	7:45 - 10:00 am	Millennium
9th	Board Meeting	11:30 am	Eagle House
10th	Executive Leadership Study Group	7:45 - 9:30 am	Millennium

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