

# IALS JOURNAL

Volume VII, No.1



international  
association of  
laboratory  
schools

## IN THIS ISSUE

Dream Telling, Dream Writing & Dream Dancing:  
College Students and Fourth Graders Create Together  
*Jeanne M. Schul and Julianne L. Bailey* 1

Study of the Impact of Disaster and the Recovery in  
Children's Health after the Kobe Earthquake in 1995,  
and the Tsunami in Northeastern Japan in 2011  
*Yoko Katsuki* 11

Intercultural Reflective Conversations:  
Fulfilling the Mission of Laboratory Schools  
in the United Arab Emirates and United States  
*Anna Dillon and Heather J. Pinedo-Burns* 14

That's Not Fair! Equality and Justice in  
Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms  
*Sandra Brown Turner, Satomi Izumi-Taylor,  
and Vivian Morris* 24

Seamless Sustainable Synergy:  
Relationships that Serve the Greater Good  
*Cheryl A. Slattery* 30

Book Reviews  
*Elizabeth Morley* 32

Beyond Laboratory Schools: Transforming Lives, Notes  
from the IALS Annual Conference in Puerto Rico, 2016  
*Nicolas Ramos Ortiz* 34



## **International Association of Laboratory Schools Officers and Standing Committees 2016-2017**

### **The International Association of Laboratory and University Affiliated Schools Officers 2016-2017**

Executive Director:  
Patricia Diebold, Edinboro University of PA, Retired

President:  
Jill Sarada, University of Pittsburgh

President-Elect:  
Amani Reed, Columbia University

Past-President:  
Konnie Serr, Shippensburg University of PA

Recording Secretary:  
Mary Jane Taylor, Shippensburg University of PA,  
Retired

International Programming:  
Elizabeth Morley, University of Toronto, Retired

Grants Chair:  
Jill Sarada, University of Pittsburgh

Membership Chair:  
Sandra Brown Turner, University of Memphis

Finance/Audit Chair:  
Sharon Carver, Carnegie Mellon University

Development Chair:  
Wade Smith, Louisiana State University

Governance Chair:  
Marilyn Tolbert, Texas Christian University

Outreach Chair and Conference Director:  
Nicholas Ramos Ortiz

Board Members:  
Ceceile Minott, University of the West Indies  
Marilyn Tolbert, Texas Christian University  
Richard Messina, University of Toronto  
Jean Bird, Carnegie Mellon University  
Debra Belvin, Berry College

### **Endowment Board**

Endowment Board Chair:  
Wade Smith, Louisiana State University

IALS President:  
Jill Sarada, University of Pittsburgh

IALS Past-President:  
Konnie Serr, Shippensburg University of PA

President-Elect:  
Amani Reed, Columbia University

Executive Director:  
Patricia Diebold, Edinboro University of PA, Retired

Secretary:  
Mary Jane Taylor, Shippensburg University of PA,  
Retired

International Committee Chair:  
Elizabeth Morley, University of Toronto, Retired

Grants Committee Chair:  
Jill Sarada, University of Pittsburgh

### **Members of IALS Board of Directors**

IALS General Membership 3 yr term:  
Diana Dimitrovski, University of Pittsburgh

IALS General Membership 3 yr term:  
Ruth Fitzpatrick, Bridgewater State College, MA., Retired

Annual Appointment by Board:  
Arnold Lindaman, Northwest Missouri State, Retire

---

**IALS Journal**  
**Volume 7, Issue 1**

## **CONTENTS**

Editor's Comments / **iii**

### **Featured Article:**

Dream Telling, Dream Writing & Dream Dancing: College Students and Fourth Graders Create Together  
*Submitted by Jeanne M. Schul and Julianne L. Bailey* / **1**

Study of the Impact of Disaster and the Recovery in Children's Health after the Kobe Earthquake in 1995,  
 and the Tsunami in Northeastern Japan in 2011  
*Submitted by Yoko Katsuki* / **11**

Intercultural Reflective Conversations: Fulfilling the Mission of Laboratory Schools in the United Arab Emirates  
 and United States  
*Submitted by Anna Dillon and Heather J. Pinedo-Burns* / **14**

That's Not Fair! Equality and Justice in Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms  
*Submitted by Sandra Brown Turner, Satomi Izumi-Taylor, and Vivian Morris* / **24**

Seamless Sustainable Synergy: Relationships that Serve the Greater Good  
*Submitted by Cheryl A. Slattery* / **30**

Book Reviews  
*Submitted by Elizabeth Morley* / **32**

Beyond Laboratory Schools: Transforming Lives, Notes from the IALS Annual Conference in Puerto Rico, 2016  
*Submitted by Nicolas Ramos Ortiz* / **34**

Information for Contributors / **Inside Back Cover**

**JOURNAL EDITORS**

**Dr. Christopher Keyes**, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania earned his PhD in Language, Literacy and Culture from Vanderbilt University. His research focuses on multilingual students and on professional learning. He is presently an assistant professor of teacher education at Shippensburg University, where he teaches in the graduate reading program, the middle-level education program, and the ESL program. He has had three children attend the Grace B. Luhrs University Elementary Laboratory School at Shippensburg University.

**Dr. Shannon Mortimore-Smith** earned her PhD in English Education from Western Michigan University. She is currently an Assistant Professor of English at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, where she teaches adolescent literature and secondary certification courses. Her research interests include multimodal, 21st-century, and New Media literacies, including the role of comics, graphic novels, Japanese manga, and video games in the English classroom. Her daughter attends the Grace B. Luhrs University Elementary Laboratory School at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

**REVIEW BOARD**

Marilyn Tolbert	Texas Christian University
Jean Bird	Carnegie Mellon University
Sandra Turner	University of Memphis
Cheryl Slattery	Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
Rebecca Blahus	Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
Elizabeth Morley	University of Toronto
Sharon Carnahan	Rollins College

**EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The *IALS Journal* is published once a year and addresses key issues facing today's laboratory and university affiliated schools. Articles offer perspectives on educational trends and include topics such as the history and future of lab schools, innovations in curricula and programs, lab school administration, and teacher education. The journal includes articles grounded in evidence-based classroom practices, action research, and theoretically based quantitative and qualitative scholarship.

Points of view or opinions expressed in the *IALS Journal* do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the *IALS Journal* editors or IALS: The International Association of Laboratory Schools. IALS supports this journal to share ideas and stimulate discussion within the campus school network and with public and independent schools. Contributing authors are encouraged to express their opinions and research openly on issues related to teacher preparation, research, curriculum development, pedagogy, and staff development. Readers should evaluate these ideas in regards to the environment of their campus, independent, or public school.

The *IALS Journal* is printed once a year by Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, 1871 Old Main Drive, Shippensburg, PA, 17257. The Executive Director of IALS is Patricia Diebold of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, Edinboro, PA. Current copies of the *IALS Journal* may be obtained from the journal editors or online at the IALS website at: <http://www.laboratoryschools.org/>

IALS: Dedicated to Research, Leadership,  
And Educational Excellence.

## THE WELCOME BACK EDITION: EDITOR'S COMMENTS

With many thanks to the IALS Executive Board and to our current president,

Dr. Jill Serada for her leadership, we are pleased to present the seventh volume of the *International Association of Laboratory Schools Journal*. It is without question that the valuable work of laboratory schools across the world and in the association have continued to positively impact the lives and the education of our children. In this volume and in all that follow, we aspire to provide a home for the myriad voices that are represented within our laboratory schools and to celebrate our collaborative achievements with even wider audiences.

This volume represents the combined efforts of a broad spectrum of IALS members. Laboratory school teachers, university professors, and graduate students from across the globe have contributed their academic work to this volume, and by doing so, they have asked us to consider our own stake in the greater mission of our schools. As such, we are proud to present the following contributions to this seventh volume of the *IALS Journal*.

In the featured article, "Dream Telling, Dream Writing & Dream Dancing: College Students and Fourth Graders Create Together," Jeanne M. Schul and Julianne Bailey discuss their nine year collaboration to embed kinesthetic learning practices alongside the process of writing. The article creatively parallels the process of writing: planning, revising, critiquing, and reflecting, to the art and the act of performance itself. Their work speaks meaningfully to the ability of our laboratory schools and their partners to advocate for and to execute innovative instruction for our students.

Coming from Kobe, Japan, Dr. Katsuki describes the impact of the earthquake and resulting tsunami on school children. Examining data on mental health and physical health, this article considers how schools might address students' needs at such times. Indeed, it may be that laboratory schools could lead the way in preparing for disaster and in meeting community needs during a disaster.

Comparing the missions of two laboratory schools is the focus of Dr. Dillon and Dr. Pinedo-Burns. Writing from schools in New York City and from the United Arab

Emirates, the authors compare contexts, mission statements, and the manners in which these schools fulfill their missions. As editors, we hope that the broad scope of these articles will deepen the international reach of IALS and the IALS Journal.

Our final contribution "That's Not Fair! Equality and Justice in Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms", co-authored by Sandra Brown Turner, Satomi Izumi-Taylor, and Vivian Morris advocates for the importance of embedding culturally diverse children's literature into classroom. By examining four key issues: culture, language, and fairness; racial identity and fairness; gender identity and fairness; and the family structure and fairness, this article argues that children's literature serves as the link between what children see and what they understand about the world around them.

Further, we are pleased to feature an editorial penned by Dr. Cheryl Slattery regarding the synergy that exists between teacher education faculties and laboratory schools. In addition, we are pleased to include two relevant book reviews, written by Dr. Elizabeth Morley, that provide a glimpse into two very promising new books.

To conclude this volume, 2016 Conference Organizer, Nicolas Ramos Ortiz, presents notes on the keynote speakers, conference sessions, and events at the IALS Annual Conference in Puerto Rico titled, "Beyond Laboratory Schools: Transforming Lives."

As contributing editors, we are honored to celebrate the work that you do in your laboratory schools, with your colleagues, and for your students each day. We hope you enjoy this edition and that you, too, will consider honoring your outstanding teachers and laboratory schools and submitting your academic research and writing in future volumes of the *IALS Journal*.

Dedicated to research, leadership, and educational excellence,

Dr. Shannon Mortimore-Smith

Dr. Christopher Keyes

Editors



# Dream Telling, Dream Writing & Dream Dancing: College Students and Fourth Graders Create Together

**Jeanne M. Schul**

PH.D., DANCE SPECIALIST AT BERRY COLLEGE

**Julianne Lindholm Bailey**

M.ED, TEACHER AT BERRY COLLEGE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Introduction

How do dreams, creative dance, and creative writing figure into a fourth grade laboratory school curriculum and an undergraduate course simultaneously? Where would you find a college faculty member listening to the dreams of nine and ten year olds? When does a fourth grade teacher give dream writing assignments to college students? At Berry College, the collaborative teaching techniques of a college dance instructor and a laboratory school teacher make all of this possible, and more!

The opportunity to add kinesthetic learning to the academic day of fourth graders has proven invaluable. Students at this age love to absorb knowledge with all their senses. Movement excites the students, keeps their attention, and helps focus their natural urge to move. The collaboration between fourth graders and Berry College students in the college dance studio has been one of the most exciting times of the school year.

Kinesthetic learning works well with the constructivist approach to education of both the Berry College Charter School of Education and the Berry College Elementary and Middle (BCEMS) Laboratory Schools. Constructivism enables the student to create meaning through experience, to reflection on those experiences and to draw conclusions. Entrusting the students to create a finished performance piece allows the students a chance to grow and learn through meaningful, purposeful interaction. Additionally, as the motto of both the college and the lab school is *educating the head, heart and hands*, finding a path for educational experiences that go outside the classroom walls and textbooks enhances curriculum for both schools.

In today's educational climate, fine arts can get relegated to "extra" activities once the "real" learning has occurred. The laboratory school has a huge advantage in

being able to tap a wealth of fine arts resources provided by a college. That opens up a wide range of new learning experiences that reach other areas of the brain and development. Students at BCEMS can hardly wait until it is "their turn" to get to work with the college students. The college class and the fourth grade class meet weekly for twelve weeks. The goal of the creative movement sessions is for small groups of college students and fourth graders to create a dance for a final performance for the laboratory school and parents.

From the very beginning of the course, the college students were fascinated by the idea of teaching academic curriculum through dance and movement. Education major, Corley Peth, offered this reflection: "There is something to be said about applying movement in your classroom. As a student who could neither sit still nor keep my mouth shut for the majority of my elementary school years, I often wondered how my experience may have been different if the teachers didn't take away recess or applied kinesthetic learning techniques in their lesson plans." As a future teacher, she pointed out: "The reason I chose to take this class was to learn about applying movement in my own classroom. I want children to come to my class excited that they won't have to sit still for an entire hour while I lecture to them." There is very little lecturing taking place during the hour in the studio that the fourth graders join the college students each week!

Dr. Jeanne Schul wrote the curriculum for the dance program and has taught dance at Berry College for the past 22 years, but her focus on children's dance began when she completed her undergraduate degree from SUNY Bockport and was hired to work with the National Endowment for the Arts: Dancers-in-the-Schools program. Once she began teaching at Berry College, she created an undergraduate course entitled Children's Creative Dance, which drew from her 20 year career of

teaching creative dance in public and private schools. Her dissertation from Pacifica Graduate Institute entitled, *Creating Dances from Dreams: Embodying the Unconscious through Choreography*, brought together her lifelong career in dance with her psychological study of dreams. She now teaches graduate courses in Dreamwork, Expressive Arts, and Somatic Studies at Pacifica in addition to undergraduate courses at Berry College. Julianne Bailey has been teaching for 15 years. She has her bachelor's and master's from the University of Texas. She has taught in public schools, private schools and homeschool co-ops. She has taught a variety of grades from kindergarten through seventh grade.

In the early stages of a nine year collaboration, Dr. Schul and Mrs. Bailey varied the curriculum each year. Their goal was to physically engage the children in learning their classroom curriculum by adding kinesthetic learning to science, math, and language arts. They discovered that their team-teaching efforts were particularly fruitful when they combined the writing curriculum with movement. For the past three years, the start of every class in the studio has begun by reading both the children's dreams and those of the college students that they bring to the studio. In this way, dreams became the great equalizer. Noone's dream was more important than anyone else's. Dreams became the starting point for writing and moving. This article will discuss their three years of team-teaching with a focus on dreams to teach expressiveness in writing and movement.

Both Dr. Schul and Mrs. Bailey have observed, over the nine years of building this class, the construction of learning as college students and elementary students translate ideas from their heads into the movement performance pieces. The planning, revising, critiquing, reflecting, adjusting and then performing their ideas combines all the skills, knowledge and ownership that contributes to building the lifelong learners that the college and the lab school strive to nurture. We urge fine arts faculty and the laboratory school teachers to find creative ways to collaborate. In our experience, this team-teaching approach is enthusiastically received by elementary and college students alike and both groups of learners benefit greatly.

One might question why we chose dreams as our theme. What we learned was that fourth graders were thrilled to be asked to talk about their dreams. The first day that Dr. Schul entered their classroom and asked if anyone had a dream recently, nearly every hand in the room shot up in the air! After listening to every dream and hearing classmates exclaim that they had experi-

enced similar dreams and nightmares as their peers were telling, the co-teachers knew they were on to something! Their dreams held so much mystery that the laboratory school students were very curious to pursue them as a class project.

The next inquiry might be: Is this approach to teaching supported in the literature? The challenge in answering this question is that the literature on children's dreams focuses on very specific approaches. In the article, "The Development of Cognitive and Emotional Processing as Reflected in Children's Dreams: Active Self in an Eventful Dream Signals Better Neuropsychological Skills," Sandor, Szakadat, and Bodizs (2016) point out that their study was "the first to explore the connection between children's cognitive maturation and dreaming" (p. 59). What this team of dream researchers discovered suggests that "the dreamer's presence in their dreams (manifested in activities, interactions, self-effectiveness, willful effort, and cognitive reflections) indicates more effective executive control in waking life" and "the quality and content of these activities and interactions are correlated with the child's capacities of emotional processing" (p. 58). In our work with the fourth graders, most of the dreams that they chose to present were those that represented themselves as active dream figures, often with a great deal of affect. In their small group interactions with their special college teachers, many emotions were discussed and safe ways of embodying those feelings became part of the movement they created together.

The next consideration was the interaction of the pre-service teachers with the dreams of their fourth graders. In the article, "Dream Work with Children: Perceptions and Practices of School Mental Health Professionals," Huermann, Crook Lyon, and Fischer (2009) indicate that most practitioners did not feel competent working with children's dreams, but were interested in receiving more inservice training in dream work. Our work with the children's dreams differed from this survey in that Dr. Schul's dissertation focused on creating dances from dreams, so her college students were coached continuously throughout the project. Also, our interaction with dreams *never involved interpretation*. Instead, we listened and explored the dreams creatively. A third aspect of our project that was unique was that both the college student and the fourth grade student shared their dream assignments. So, there was no power differential in that interaction.

How does one build a constructivist learning experience when collaborating between an elementary class—with a variety of skills and interests and coordination—and



a college class—with a variety of majors? The answer we discovered was to build a base for the curriculum on something every single person in the room can and does experience: dreams! We found support for our approach in Bulkeley and Bulkley” (2012) book, *Children’s Dreams: Understanding the Most Memorable Dreams and Nightmares of Childhood*. In their introduction they explain: “We have written this book for teachers, therapists, nurses, counselors . . . We want to help people in these professions respond effectively when children show an interest in their dreams, learning how to take dreams seriously as expressions of emotional truth rather than dismissing them as sleep-addled nonsense” (p. 3).

Our creative movement approach involved listening into the dreams of all the participants and making dream-based dances through improvising and playing with various aspects of the dreams. This way of working was supported in Oremland’s 1998 article, “Play, Dreams, and Creativity,” which was published in *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*. He concludes that of all the aspects of childhood, “only dreaming continues as the vestige of early creative abilities” and “for most individuals, only dreaming remains as the creative playground . . . creative individuals are our collective dreamers who continue to know how to play” (p. 34).

Circling back to the question of how a constructivist approach to teaching in the laboratory school relates to our dream-themed creative movement sessions between the fourth graders and the college students, the literature supported our concept once again. In *Dreamcatching: Every Parent’s Guide to Exploring and Understanding Children’s Dreams and Nightmares*, Siegel and Bulkeley (1998) explain: “A dream is a story created, produced, and directed by the dreamer. Using creative writing, a child can embellish that story, continue it, change the dialogue, or create an entirely new ending” (p. 246). Our collaboration expanded the dream writing into an embodied experience for both the laboratory students and their college teachers, which ultimately culminated in a dance performance for the entire laboratory school and community: including all the elementary and middle school students, the performers’ parents, as well as invited college faculty and students.

From the perspective of the undergraduate students, the opportunity to work directly with children during classtime has consistently received very positive course evaluations, such as: “This course is wonderful in the way that it teaches how to instruct children in dance and movement.” At first, the college students’ thought letters reflect significant anxiety about meeting their fourth grade

“buddies,” with fears ranging from not being liked by their assigned students to concerns about how they will handle difficult situations; but the final thought letters invariably describe great satisfaction with nurturing the learning experience of their fourth graders and the outcome of their work together. Often, the spontaneity of the children’s creative movement inspires the college students to take more creative risks, rather than simply dancing with the technical training they have acquired. Psychology major and dance minor, Emily Bevels, pointed out: “Our students were never self conscious. They were willing to put themselves out there, and that was so inspiring for me. I often worry that as a dancer with little technical training that I am not good enough, but watching my students I realized that there is no true measure of success unless a person is unwilling to try. Every single one of my students was just happy to work on the piece, and it showed.”

The focus on dreams involved both the fourth graders and the college students in dream writing assignments for every creative movement session, which they brought to the studio and shared each week. This mutual sharing between the children and their college teachers very quickly built trust, enabling more creativity to blossom when they began to move the characters and action in their dreams. Lisa Robertson, an Exercise Science major and Chemistry minor, wrote: “The storyline and character dynamic activity sparked creative plot formation in the students and college teachers. It was a great way to improve character communication through dance.” She also noted: “I have tried to include descriptive words, show emotion, and highlight characters in my dream logs to serve as an example for the fourth graders.”

## Preparation

Before the semester begins, Dr. Schul and Mrs. Bailey meet as team-teachers and map out the curriculum. As the dream specialist, Dr. Schul visits the fourth grade classroom and talks about dreams. When it is the students’ turn to share, almost everyone is bubbling over with dream stories or nightmares. In the college course, Children’s Creative Dance, Mrs. Bailey visits the dance class to talk about the fourth grade curriculum, learning goals, behavioral expectations, and developmental issues. As the fourth grade classroom teacher, she explains the goal of integrating creative movement into the Language Arts curriculum. Economics major and dance minor, Emily Zillweger, shared: “I am extremely excited to learn with these students about translating language into movement through the avenue of dream.” After three classes with the

fourth graders, college student Lisa Robertson wrote this journal reflection: “Fourth grade, as Mrs. Bailey described, is a special year developmentally for students. They are beginning to understand how the world connects around them and the influence they have on it. This wonderful time occurs before romantic interests dominate major behavioral decisions. This allows room for much growth and influence in the classroom! Children’s Creative Dance, in particular, has aimed to develop expressive communication skills through movement while instilling confidence and kinesthetic awareness in students.”

Before combining classes, the fourth graders work on their writing skills. At Berry College Elementary and Middle School, students write daily. In the elementary curriculum, an important piece of that writing time is journaling. In fourth grade, journals are written in for up to thirty minutes and vary from written conversations with the teacher (letter journals) to responses to a prompt, as well as connections with text (books being read to the class) and open responses.

Before the collaboration between classes begins, college students in Children’s Creative Dance learn unique approaches to basic movement and dance skills, while also clarifying creative dance terminology. After the first three weeks of the semester, the Monday class is spent experimenting with dance activities which will integrate dreams in the Wednesday class with the fourth grade buddies. This approach enables the college students to feel prepared to lead their elementary school partners through the activities in which creative dance is integrated into the writing curriculum. In her first thought letter, college student Lisa Robertson wrote: “A subsequent objective of the class is to enhance classroom material. Presenting concepts of creative writing and other subjects through an alternate media (dance) may relate stronger to some students than traditional classroom learning. At the very least, the topics are reaffirmed and solidified for others. From my observation as a “college buddy,” the students respond with enthusiasm when given the opportunity to connect classroom topics to creative dance.”

### **Becoming a Dreaming Community**

The importance that this collaboration places on using dreams as a focus of the curriculum has a basis in human development: dream sleep helps the brain restore and process data (Mallon, 2002, pp. 10, 12). Elementary students are spending seven hours a day absorbing new information, including the writing curriculum. College students are potentially spending just as long on their

classes daily. Understanding the brain’s purpose for dreaming allows students to see dreams as necessary and helpful to their own development. Additionally, dreams help students deal with the unknown (pp. 17, 21). Both fourth graders and college students are dealing with anxiety in their school settings. Consciously reflecting on dreams allows students of all ages to consider the anxiety that may be surfacing. Furthermore, providing a safe zone for talking about dreams allows students to work through difficult feelings (p. 51) In her research, Mallon finds that nine and ten year olds (fourth graders) have many dreams that deal with insecurity and vulnerability. Our curricular focus on dreams allows students to not only understand the purpose of dreams but to also work on their own emotional health and security over and beyond the academic benefit.

To enable everyone involved to feel comfortable with dream exploration, the first task as teachers is to create a judgment-free environment. It is imperative to establish a safe container for the children’s dream work where no one feels ridiculed because of the content of their dreams. Because fourth grade is a time of enormous transition—leaving the state of childhood but not quite moving into the preteen era—nightmares are more likely to flare up. Most of the children did not initially have many opportunities to process these disconcerting dreams. It was important to honor the children’s dreams by giving them a place to be written down, discussed, and enacted. However, the class policy was *not to interpret the children’s dreams* in any way. In the role of teachers, as opposed to therapists, the recommendations of Siegel and Bulkeley (1998) were followed, which advise parents to “welcome the playful creations of their children’s dreams with the same open, noninterpretive attitude, admiring and celebrating these imaginative wonders without making disruptive analyses and interpretations of what the parents think the dreams ‘really mean’” (p. 34).

The fourth graders definitely claimed ownership of their dream stories and images. Their enthusiasm about sharing them provided a great starting point for incorporating something that every child could do. Creative problem-solving techniques were employed during the planning aspect of the lesson. College student Lisa Robertson described this process in her assessment of the fourth lesson: “Our brainstorming activity for the creative dance performance was successful, organized, and incorporated lots of ideas from students’ dreams.”

When the topic turned to nightmares, the teachers assured the children that they are not alone in their experience of having scary dreams. In fact, students worked

with ways to make their threatening nighttime visitors more tolerable. One example presented was to enact aspects of the frightening dreams—when exploring the action or verbs or emotions in a dream—but suggested that the frightened dreamer change roles and act out the role of the pursuer, instead of the one being chased. Generally, this empowered the dreamer and offered another perspective on the dream.

Because dreams are precisely what we know least about ourselves, everyone was cautioned not to share anyone else's dream. In this era of instantaneous communication, it felt imperative to impress this requirement of confidentiality upon the college teachers. Nothing in our creative dream class was allowed to become fodder for social media.

### **Dream Writing Assignments**

Journaling about dreams in the fourth grade classroom lands somewhere between a prompt and an open response. Sometimes it was with a given prompt: record a dream that made you feel sorry when it ended; or record a dream that involved an animal. At other times, the invitation was open-ended: write about your dreams. The journal entry was written during their morning work. A recommended method of encouraging both writing and creativity is to keep a special folder to record dreams that the student can refer back to and look for meaning and patterns (Mallon, 2002, p. 48). Dreams are a wonderful way for students to explore their own creativity. Siegel and Bulkeley (1998) offer: "The creative energies of children's dreams flow naturally and freely every night; all you need is a bit of patience and a sense of adventure to help your children learn how to draw upon this truly infinite fountain of spontaneous expression" (p. 16).

When the fourth graders began journaling about their dreams, they started discussing them more with the classroom teacher and each other. They would get excited about what they had dreamt the night before. Siegel and Bulkeley (1998) find that a result of a child looking at dreams as play is a shift from "rational explanation to imaginative expression" (p. 27). In their journals, you can see this expression take place. Joanna writes in her dream journal: "I was working in a donut shop. And when we were glazing them one of them was magic and it was alive." In her dream, that which is usually inanimate took on a life of its own. This offered Joanna an entirely new approach to her creative writing. Anna's dream explores super-human abilities: "I traveled into the sky and there were cotton candy clouds! I ate some and threw

some to my sister." Anna's dream image of "cotton candy clouds" provides a wonderful starting place from which to develop an imaginative story.

Students wrote about their dreams weekly for the entire twelve weeks of the collaboration. As they got into the habit of thinking about their dreams each week, they found that they started to remember them more. Molly wrote in her dream journal: "I started to try to think about my dreams and try to remember my dreams. I used to not even think about my dreams at all but now I do and I like to share my dreams." As they got into the routine of thinking and writing about dreams, students began to see their creative potential. Grace reflected: "Now when I think in my bed I feel MUCH more creative." Pete shared his personal method of dream recall that he developed during class: "Now I try to remember all of my dreams....What I do is right when I wake up I sit in my bed and try to remember the whole thing. Then I try to write down everything that I can remember."

### **Creative Movement Class**

At the beginning of the first session together, the college student-teachers with color-coded nametags were waiting for the fourth graders in the studio, sitting on the floor in a circle. The fourth grader's task was to determine who his or her college "buddy" was given only the clue of a newly received nametag. Very quickly, one of the students announced that the student's color matched the color of the college teacher's nametag. Once all the fourth graders had located their "buddies," they were asked to interview each other. Then, the college teachers were invited to introduce their pair or trio of students, followed by the students introducing their college teacher to everyone in the circle. Once some level of social interaction had been established, the co-leaders began the class. Dr. Schul lead a Focusing Activity that involved both the fourth graders and their college teachers in a Fast Follow activity, where everyone attempted to mirror the quickly changing shapes of the leader. Next, the college teachers lead the entire group in locomotor skills, while each individual college teacher silently assessed the skill level of the children and offered help where needed. One of the student leaders, Lisa Robertson, wrote: "This was a great way to start the class and make everyone (college kids included) feel very comfortable with moving freely. I was intimidated at first to lead the entire group, but once I started, I realized how fun it was and felt I could be creative without worrying what fourth graders thought of me." With both of these initial activities, the

objective was to introduce the children to an embodied approach to learning, exploring the possibilities of shaping and locomotor patterns.

In the initial Developmental Activity, Mrs. Bailey involved the children and college teachers in moving verbs—then introducing adverbs to the action—while focusing on how adverbs changed their movement quality. This was then linked to how adverbs in writing clarify vague descriptions. Dr. Schul lead the final Creative Integration Activity: two college teachers combined their groups into a pod and each pod picked three verb cards. The first verb took the group into the center of the space, they moved the second verb in the middle, and the third verb carried them back to their starting place on the perimeter of the space. An example of the verbs for one group included: bounce, melt, and spin. The creative writing objectives for the last two activities were designed to enable the student to explore descriptive words through movement and become familiar with their use, which would then be included in their journaling. The creative movement objective was to move in a way that demonstrated the verbs and developed a cohesive sequence of actions through space, which would later be reflected in the student choreography.

At the end of the very first class together, the concept of Communication Dialogues was introduced. The fourth graders and their college teachers came back to the circle and the team-teachers called on students to summarize what they had learned. Then, Mrs. Bailey introduced the Writing Folder and gave fourth graders and college students alike their first dream writing assignment. As Lisa Robertson reflected on the first lesson, she wrote: “I am looking forward to reading the fourth grader’s writings about dreams and also recording my own! I can already tell this is going to be a great enriching activity for the student’s vocabulary and self expression.”

After the first week, every class started with a sharing time for small groups of students, often two or three fourth graders and one college student, to discuss what they had written. Every student, fourth grader and college student alike, recorded dreams on their own in journal entries and then shared them with each other. All students brought their journal entry about their dreams to our collaborative class and combined them into one folder. Students also wrote about their enjoyment of sharing dreams with each other. Chloe wrote in her journal: “Some of my weird and scary dreams aren’t weird and scary anymore. Probably because I’m telling someone about my dream. They kind of seem more interesting.” By the third class, Early childhood education major

and dance minor, Thalia Jones, observed: “Their dreams did have strong emotions, and they used strong words to describe them.” Within the first three weeks, writing dreams seemed to spark a more vibrant writing style among the fourth graders.

The college students were advised not to pass judgment on the children’s dreams, but to listen and discuss them encouragingly. Their assigned reading included Siegel and Bulkeley’s (1998) chapter entitled, “Teacher’s Guide to Creative Dream Work,” which insisted: “It is important that all sharing emphasize an emotionally supportive and playful approach and steer clear of interpretations or judgments about the meaning of symbols” (p. 258). Judging children’s dreams has been shown to cause children to refuse to share further (Mallon, 2002, p. 44).

After sharing their journals, students worked on moving their dream ideas. At the beginning of the class, the team-teachers modeled taking one aspect of dreams (plot, theme, emotion, characters) and creating a movement or dance to represent elements. In one Creative Integration Activity, the pods of two teachers and four or five children were asked to pick out the emotional tone of their group’s dreams. College student Lisa Robertson noted in her assessment of the second class: “When it came time to draw upon several emotions from the dreams, the students had no problem identifying how they felt at various stages of their dreams.”

The five Ps were introduced as a method of organizing the creative problem-solving process: **Pick** the ideas, **Plan** the action, **Practice** the flow of the dance, **Perform** for the class, and then **Process** with the whole group. One student teacher noted: “During this activity, the 5 Ps really helped plan our discussion and practice time effectively.” Sometimes the team-teachers would give feedback when they felt the pods needed guidance. For example, Mrs. Bailey once advised the pods to revisit their group process and clarify the theme of their dances to make it more understandable for the audience. Thalia Jones wrote in the assessment of this activity: “The dances were a little hard to figure out the first time we watched them. After the group took time, it was clearer what setting and emotion they were trying to express.” Lisa Robertson found this approach to orchestrating their group performance very helpful: “The guidance from Dr. Schul to use the 5 Ps, as well as Mrs. Bailey’s recommendation to define a theme for our performance helped clarify and strengthen the creative process.”

The college teachers had a steep learning curve. Since this course is offered as an undergraduate course, many had never worked with children before. Most had never

taught a class. Thalia Jones observed: “Lead teachers were not very clear in their instructions, so there was some confusion at first.” It was this kind of peer reflection that gently guided the developing teaching style of these pre-service teachers, along with guidance of the two team-teachers. Another aspect of learning to teach was realizing that, as teachers to their pod of fourth graders, they were always a role model. Lisa Robertson shared this reflection: “It has been hard to remember that the fourth graders are absorbing so much from our demeanor, word choices, actions, and instructions. I am not used to being viewed as the authority figure in any environment. The experience has helped me grow as a leader and teacher to others and remember that the most effective means of instruction is through exemplification.”

Finally, the students were responsible for creating a three to four minute dance based on dreams that had been written, shared, and danced during the class to be performed for the whole school (Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and parents at an assembly. At this point, the college students became the main collaborators: choreographing and directing their performances. This became a time to translate visual (dreams) and written (journal) ideas into movement. Fourth grade student, Sydney, wrote: “We have been acting out our dreams instead of dreaming them and then forgetting. A lot of us would just dream something and then forget about it and never go back to it. So it has made us remember a lot of dreams.” Siegel and Bulkeley (1998) insist: “When grown-ups treat dreams as important and worthy of discussion, children begin to pay attention to their dreams and remember them more often” (p. 3).

During the second half of the class, the college teachers were given increasingly larger time periods in which to create their dances with the fourth graders. Emily Zillweger described this process: “Having to teach approximately twenty fourth graders how to translate story into movement is an awfully daunting task.” And yet, as college teacher Thalia Jones shared, they were capable of accomplishing this: “I believe we are making great progress; we have our successes and struggles with our children as we get closer to our performance . . . Their performance is slowly taking shape, but because of their input from their dreams it is mostly choreographed.”

## Findings

How do you assess the way children’s thinking about dreams changed after writing, sharing, and dancing about them for twelve weeks? Students reflected on the cre-

ative dance class in their final journal entry without any specific prompt. Eight percent of the fourth grade students mentioned enjoying the writing process of recording dreams. Joanna declared: “Now I really like writing down dreams.” Eight percent of the students wrote about enjoying sharing the dreams with others. Triet revealed: “When I tell someone about my dream I feel better. Like it is not trapped inside me and hunting me anymore.” Eight percent of the students also wrote about enjoying the dance aspect of the class more than they predicted. Anna discovered: “I did not think I would have fun because I didn’t like dancing very much. I actually had a lot of fun making up our dance and doing it.” Seventeen percent of the students reflected on how their movements had changed since working on this class. Lee pointed out: “My way of moving has also changed by the way I think about the importance of different parts of the body and what positions they should be in at any and all times.” Molly mentioned: “My movements are more creative and a little more graceful, at least that’s what I think.” Twenty-one percent of the students said they were remembering their dreams much more since the class began. Madison stated: “I have been thinking about them much more vividly and remembering them a lot more than I used to.”

The most impressive statistic was that fifty percent of the fourth grade students wrote about their perceptions of dreams changing since working with this class. Students wrote about finding more meaning in their dreams. Abigail wrote: “I think that my dreams actually mean more to me now instead of being *just a dream*; now they are special.” David wrote about the purpose of his dreams: “At the start before Creative Movement I just thought dreams were pointless and they meant nothing at all. Then afterwards I learned dreams are great ways to express your feelings.” They also wrote about feeling more empowered by their dreams. In a journal entry, Levi shared: “I also have been more prepared in life later. Since Creative Movement, I can control my dreams, so I have a lot more time to think . . . It has opened my mind to lots of more interesting possibilities.” Finally, the fourth graders wrote about how they found enjoyment and creativity in their dreams. Ava stated: “Before we started doing Creative Movement I thought I could never explain my dreams in words or in movement but now I know I can. I also thought dreams were like TV but now its like every night is a whole new adventure.” Bryce, a fourth grader, stated: “I thought dreams were just a figment of your imagination but really they’re a lot more.”

College students had similar patterns in their reflections. Twelve percent of college students indicated that



they enjoyed writing about their dreams. Animal science major and dance minor, Noelle Mouton, wrote: “I am going to start a consistent dream journal from which I will have material that I could create future dances from if I wanted.” Another college student concluded: “I have been dreaming significantly more this semester than last, and I’m assuming that the writing down of my dreams has encouraged my subconscious to remember all the crazy stuff that’s going on up there.” College students also focused on how their relationship with the fourth graders changed. Eighteen percent of the reflections mentioned how the college students had changed their approach to teaching. For example, another college student wrote: “I should trust them more because they can do these things without us holding their hand every step.” Twenty-nine percent of the college students reflected on their relationship with the fourth graders. Middle grades education major and Spanish minor, Alyssa Bishop realized: “At the beginning of the semester both of my kids were a little shy. They would either talk very softly or they wouldn’t speak their mind. Now after the course of this semester my kids are all about giving me new ideas and want to be heard. I am so proud of the transformation they have made in this class.”

The most common reflection from the college students was the same as the fourth graders. The college students found that their perception of dreams changed during this class. Thirty-five percent of the reflections mentioned a shift in their own perceptions. For example, Brittany Brown, an early childhood education major, wrote: “Dreams can tell much about a person, and engage us in a more personal level with them. Dreams don’t have to be terrifying we can learn to overcome that terror, to put ourselves in a different position. Dreams are a good insight, and a good thing to express to those around us.” College students saw a change in how they enjoyed sharing dreams. Psychology major and dance minor, Abbey Smyth, stated. “I have really enjoyed sharing my thoughts with Bryce and Beth. I have also enjoyed hearing their dreams. We have been able to share our happy thoughts, and also work through the more scary dreams.” Finally, their perception of dreams as a way to enhance creativity grew. Zahra Ladiwala reflected: “Studying dreams has also helped me become a creative and interactive writer with a better imagination. I have learned how to interact and form new ideas.” This last change circles back to the objective of the course, which was to enhance the elementary students’ writing skills. It was a happy surprise to see the same effect in the college students’ writing.

## In Conclusion

The strength of this collaborative opportunity lies in many elements. First, this class draws on a subject that all students can relate to because everyone dreams. The challenge for the college teachers was creating a dance performance with their pod of fourth graders based on the dreams that they had written. When speaking about this final performance, Noelle Mouton wrote: “I think the most effective teaching strategy that I implemented was having each student in our pod choose a character from his or her own dreams that he or she wanted to portray in the final performance. That way each fourth grader had a deep connection with their character, and that came across to the audience in their performance.” As much of a struggle as this collaborative process can be, everyone was satisfied with their part of the performance. In Noelle’s case, she concluded: “Enhanced with the facial expressions and full body movements that the kids used to portray their characters, the dance told a fun story of mystery and adventure that delighted and engaged the audience’s imagination.” Thalia Jones reflected: “Our group dance is about how emotions can leave a strong effect on us when we wake up. Our dreams tell of our deepest feelings and sometimes those are the ones that we cannot say.” She concluded: “Looking back at where we started with a complicated plot and wild dreams to a definitive dance with characters is amazing!”

Secondly, this teaching approach provided multiple ways to use the shared experience of dreaming to express each person’s creativity. Lisa Robertson reflected: “Since beginning to form our performance dances with the fourth graders and within our peer groups, the creative process has come to life. I have been surprised and challenged by ideas created from collaboration. At times it was difficult to combine the plethora of dream ideas from our fourth graders, but through compromise and simplification we were able to represent each student in our dance.” Thalia Jones reported: “I believe that I am truly learning a lot from this experience of teaching children how to express themselves creatively. I do enjoy working with my three kids because they all bring such energy and creativity to our group dynamic.” In her final thought letter, Thalia concluded: “Overall, I think these students became better creative writers and dancers. As the semester went on my kids came up with different ways to do things. I think they started to think more abstractly about the lessons and how to do the activities. I think they learned a lot about themselves through exploring their dreams and this helped unlock the door to creativity.”

Thirdly, this class provided the opportunity to build the self-confidence of the students to interact with, create, and control their world. Thalia Jones wrote: “I think this class can improve self-confidence and creativity. I think I benefited in this class in many ways. I think my confidence in myself as a dancer grew. I watched one of my students grow confident in participating in a group setting.” The college students, in particular, expressed a sense of empowerment as teachers. Lisa Robertson described her choreographic experience with her co-teacher: “Trying to understand how we would combine the dreams of the fourth graders into a coherent choreographed piece was difficult. It took several planning sessions until I felt confident of our plan to complete the assignment, but I can say now that I feel confident and proud of what Noemi and I have put together with our students.” International studies major and dance minor, Noemi de Miguel Mota wrote about her enhanced sense of agency: “I have learned a lot in class, about children, about myself, and about teaching. This class has taught me a lot of things, including that teaching is not as scary as I thought it would be and that I can be confident and happy leading a class.”



Thalia Jones noticed that “the kids were really expressive in their emotions . . . The children were good at expressing movement clearly. They were good at using their bodies to express each emotion while using movement.” At the final dress rehearsal, Emily Zillweger, reported: “The students were really energized and excited; and it was nice to see them translate that excitement into their bodies. Every student remembered their choreography and was able to convey emotions with their faces.” Regarding the final performance, Lisa Robertson observed: “The excitement was pouring out of our fourth graders!”

Finally, integrating creative dance into the language arts curriculum of the fourth grade was a positive experience for both the fourth graders and the college students. Emily Zillweger observed: “Working with them forced me to think about using dance in different ways to convey concepts of educational subjects, like science. I thought about how I could teach about forms of energy, or the water cycle using the human body. I thought about how using similes could make movement larger and clearer. As a dancer, artistry is something that transcends the movement on its own and I believe this class helped me tap into parts of my artistry by connecting it to something I have always been good at, school.” Emily also reflected on the fourth graders learning process: “The children were able to experience a regular educational class like creative writing in an interesting and active way through movement, and I believe that could only stimulate their learning even further beyond the classroom. Connecting the two types of activities (educational and physical) into one works both sides of the brain at once, and this reinforces their long term understanding of concepts. While they were moving around, skipping, leaping, and pretending to be snails, they were also learning about similes, adverbs, and emotions, all of which they could use in their own writing in the future.” Fourth grader, Jillian shared: “Now I think that you can do cool things with your dreams, like talk about them. Write about it. Make a story out of it. Also draw a picture or paint a picture of the prettiest or ugliest thing in your dream. You could even play music that might even go with the scariest parts and the happiest parts of your dream.”

### Recommendations:

We would like to see classroom teachers introduce dream awareness into their classrooms, offering children of all ages a non-judgmental place to share what is swirling around in their minds as they come into school each morning. What if we assigned “Morning Pages,” as Julia

Cameron (2002) recommends? Every morning the children journal long enough to fill three pages. That would enable a student to write the dream or emotion that is lingering from dreamtime or from their trip to school. It would give those feelings a place to be acknowledged, which would hopefully enable that student to be more focused throughout the school day. Sometimes the journaling could be directed with a writing prompt regarding dreams, with a discussion to follow that would allow the dreams to be voiced.

We would also recommend that the fine arts faculty and the laboratory school teachers find ways to collaborate that interest both parties. When the team-teachers are enthusiastic about the content being shared, the excitement is contagious! The team-teachers grow professionally from the collaboration. Combining a college class and an elementary class has proven to be very successful for both the elementary students and the college students. Both groups learn from each other and both benefit from the student-teacher ratio. The college teacher is able to experiment with her leadership skills, while developing her active listening abilities. The elementary student has the rare opportunity to work in a very small group with the college teacher's attention shared with only one or two other children. Additionally, the elementary student gets a dynamic, kinesthetic approach to learning. Everyone is a winner!

## REFERENCES:

- Bulkeley, K. and Bulkley, P. (2012). *Children's dreams: Understanding the most memorable dreams and nightmares of childhood*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Cameron, J. (2002). *The artist's way*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam.
- Huermann, R. Crook Lyon, R. and Fischer, L. (2009). Dream work with children: Perceptions and practices of school mental health professionals. *Educational Publishing Foundation*, 19(2), 85–96.
- Mallon, B. (2002). *Dream Time with Children*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Oremland, J. D. (1998). Play, dreams, and creativity. *Psychoanalytic study of the child*, 53, 84–94.
- Sandor, P., Szakadat, S. and Bodizs, R. (2016). The development of cognitive and emotional processing as reflected in children's dreams: Active self in an eventful dream signals better neuropsychological skills. *Dreaming*, 26(1), 58–78.
- Siegel, A. and Bulkeley, K. (1998). *Dreamcatching: Every parent's guide to exploring and understanding children's dreams and nightmares*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

## AUTHORS' BIOS

**Dr. Jeanne Schul** earned her PhD in Depth Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute and her MA in Dance from Texas Woman's University. She is Dance Specialist at Berry College, where she directs the dance program and is Artistic Director of Berry College Dance Troupe. She is also a visiting professor at Pacifica Graduate Institute, where she specializes in Dreamwork, the Expressive Arts, and Somatic Studies. Her research interests involve the integration of dance, dreams, and yoga. She has been continuously involved with Berry College Elementary School in various teaching capacities since 1991, when her daughter Laura started Kindergarten there.

**Julianne Bailey** earned her undergraduate degree in Education and her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Texas at Austin. She has taught in public and private school for 15 years. She is currently the 6th and 7th grade Language Arts and Social Studies teacher at Berry College Elementary and Middle School. Her husband is a professor at Berry College and her three daughters all attended Berry College Elementary and Middle School.



# Study of the Impact of Disaster and the Recovery in Children's Health after the Kobe Earthquake in 1995, and the Tsunami in Northeastern Japan in 2011

Yoko Katsuki

PROFESSOR OF CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT KOBE SHINWA WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, KOBE, JAPAN

---

*This paper discusses children's wellness in relation to the surrounding environment during the post-disaster recovery period, by comparing the three northeastern prefectures and Hyogo prefecture of Japan. By examining a similar case of disaster recovery in the aftermath of the Kobe Earthquake in Hyogo Prefecture in 1995, the paper further aims to explore the essential needs of children in their healthy development in post-disaster circumstances. Roundtable interviews with Non-Profit Organizations in the Northeastern city of Sendai, and individual interviews with voluntary evacuees who relocated themselves after the 2011 tsunami in Northeastern Japan to Kobe City, were held to investigate the current state of child support and children's play in the affected prefectures. This study, preliminary in nature, but important to schools systems anywhere that students will be returning to school after disaster, opens the issue of which markers of health and well-being are viable indicators, and how school-based, local, and national attention can be focused to assist in recovery.*

---

## Introduction

Twenty years have passed since the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Kobe, Japan. The number of Kobe citizens who did not experience the disaster has, in 2015, reached 40% of the city's total population because of a maturing population. In Japan, as in many parts of the world, disaster prevention and mitigation education has become one of the fundamental management strategies for the country. However, children's care and its provision in time of crisis is often overlooked due to a lack of focused resources for children in the face of multiple pressing needs in the recovery period. Adults also face difficulty at times in providing sufficient care for children in time of crisis, because they simply do not have enough emotional and/or physical capacity to do so. Nonetheless, children's growth cannot be overlooked or postponed at times of disaster, despite substantial environmental changes. By studying the current context of childcare in the affected

areas, this research aims to present a detailed proposal for children living the aftermath of severe disaster.

## 1. Children's Health in Complex Environments

*The Report on Children's Mental Health at the Time of Emergency Disaster* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), 2013) conducted surveys in schools across seven prefectures: Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Ibaragi, Tochigi, and Chiba. The schools were categorized into kindergartens, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, secondary schools, and special-needs schools. The questionnaire was answered by 4,569 principals, 33,700 homeroom teachers, 3,408 nursing teachers, 1,838 school counselors, and 335,784 parental guardians.

Overall, 12.9 % of children in the Tsunami-affected areas (Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate) experienced one of four signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or PTSD-related symptoms such as "becoming more dependent and insecure", "cannot perform what s/he could do alone before", "fearful of going outside", "absent from school more often"; regionally, Fukushima Prefecture scored the highest at 20.3% followed by Miyagi Prefecture at 16.4%. Both of these prefectures sustained significant physical disaster in the 2011 tsunami.

## 2. Impact of the Disaster on Children's Mental Health

In order to further examine the trend in the three northeastern prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, we have developed comparative figures. All three prefectures showed similar trends but Fukushima Prefecture showed the highest scores in the majority of items (Figure 1).

For example, 17.4% of children in Fukushima followed by 13.7% in Miyagi and 7.7% in Iwate were reported to be "[becoming] more dependent and insecure", which clearly shows the changing mental health of children in heavily affected prefectures. Furthermore, Fukushima, where there was rapid impact and change in the environment as a result of the disaster, scored the highest for an item, "child became more sensitive

to surrounding sounds and is more easily distressed” at 16.5 %, while Miyagi scored 11.4%, and Iwate 6.9%, respectively. For these two items, it was evident that Fukushima scored comparatively higher than two other prefectures. Miyagi prefecture, where the tsunami first hit land and many school children were killed, showed a slightly higher tendency at 9.5% for an item, “child goes into avoidance when topics or news resembling the earthquake are heard/seen”, where Fukushima and Iwate scored 8.9% and 5.4%, respectively.

### 3. From Mind to Body of the Children who Experienced the Northeastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami

An association between psychological distress and physical illness in the post-disaster **period** is yet to be confirmed scientifically for this particular event. However, *The School Health Survey: Prefecture- and Age-Specific Illness and Abnormal Patient Percentage Study (2013)* published by MEXT was studied as objective material for the purpose of this research. In addition to the three northeastern prefectures examined in the study, Hyogo Prefecture was included to better compare the current situations in disaster-affected prefectures.

Physical illnesses such as dental cavities, ear infections, sinusitis, atopic dermatitis, and asthma are the typical categories for analysis of health status of children in Japan by health experts, and these were applied to the prefectures affected by the disaster and some that were not. Those that showed the most variation among prefectures were specifically chosen to better investigate the correlation between emotional distress and physical illness.

Based on a 2014 publication of MEXT, *the National Physical Fitness and Lifestyle Survey of Elementary School Children*, which investigated physical attributes and prevalence of obesity in elementary school students, a gender specific figure in the three northeastern prefectures and Hyogo prefecture was developed. As shown, male students in Fukushima showed the highest obesity rate of 16.2%. Male students in Iwate had the rate of 14.7% while in Miyagi it was 14.0%; both also showing higher tendency for obesity compared to students in Hyogo scoring 8.6% less. In fact, it has been discovered that male students in the three northeastern prefectures are 1.8 to 2.1 times more likely to show physical signs of obesity than those in Hyogo Prefecture, unaffected by the Northeastern Tsunami. This was perceived to relate to both mental health and the availability of play space.

Another index used to determine whether a student exercises for more than 420 minutes per week shows that 59.3% of male elementary school students in Hyogo ex-

ercise for more than an hour a day, whereas in Fukushima only 46.0% of male students exercise for the same amount of time.

Traumatic experience of the disaster itself and a drastic change in lifestyle in the aftermath have together exacerbated existing illnesses or health conditions among children. Many were reported to develop more severe allergic conditions such as atopic dermatitis, asthma, and nettle rash. Rapid increase in the number of cavities was also prominent among children in the affected prefectures. Some even reported problems of psychogenic visual loss. Conditions such as stomachache, headache, stiff shoulder, strained back, and insomnia were also reported. Some children experienced seemingly opposite phenomena such as hypothermia and hyperthermia, or overeating and anorexia at the same time. Kishimoto (1997) suspects that these disorders are the combined result of pollution, disturbed life cycle, including the lack of physical exercise, deviation in meals, change in the relationship with others, and various other stress-related factors. This observation held true in the three Northeastern Prefectures after the 2011 disaster.

In the aftermath of the Kobe Earthquake, 56 schoolyards out of 117 in the city of Kobe were considered unusable due to potential aftereffects of earthquake, or school grounds being transformed into campgrounds and storage facilities for relief supplies for evacuees. It was exactly the same situation in the Northeastern Tsunami aftermath. There was a drastic reduction in play space for children for the reasons above, as well as and the presence of nuclear material in some areas in this disaster.

During the process of disaster recovery, it is evident that physical space for children’s sports and play becomes extremely limited in areas stricken by disaster. For example, school bus rides replace their usual walks to school for children who are without a local school, and physical education classes and afterschool club activities are often restricted. Children’s conversations with friends may become an undesirable noise to other residents who are tightly living together in camps of evacuees or longer term but still temporary housing. In such areas, a sharp increase in the number of children with obesity is evident in part due to a declining number of playmates, time, and physical space in which children can freely play. The concern for nuclear radiation aggravates the problem further, making it even more difficult for children to play in an open space.

### 4. Future perspective

Our surveys also revealed a scattered and confused approach of many municipalities regarding the issue of

immediate and longer-term health of children following disaster. For example, some municipalities simply handed the issues of children's play over to a volunteer Non Governmental Organization in hope that the organization would somehow resolve the issue on their behalf. This becomes particularly salient under the current system of public administration in which matters concerning children in Japan, such as their education and welfare, are handled by different administrative departments. It is often unclear with whom one must consult about affairs concerning children in the local area. Private entities that may be incapable of meeting the wide range of needs, therefore, are often asked to provide assistance even though some matters may be beyond their organizational capacity. To highlight such a circumstance, a public worker during the interview revealed in tears that, "... until recently, [the focus] has always been about seniors ...[they] did not think about children before". In such a fragmented system, it is clear that schools can and must play a key role. While parents were often uncertain about who they could rely on, school systems, as they rebuild, are a likely source of trust and robust daily support for both children and families in both immediate and longer term solutions.

### 5. Concluding Remarks

It is important to understand the needs of children in post-disaster circumstances from growth and development perspectives. This research report is preliminary, but it begins to analyze the extent of the post-disaster impact and its significance in children's physical and psychological well-being. It provides a look at impacts that are sometimes quiet but significant markers for future health and well-being of children post-disaster. Clearly, resolving any underlying issues in a timely manner poses many challenges, but is necessary. Teachers proved to have a clear sense of the well-being of their students, when surveyed, and these data are essential in planning for community-wide solutions.

There are directions to turn in extending this research work. These include: examination of the resiliency factors in a child's life after disaster; the role teachers and schools can most effectively play in assessment and recovery of children's well-being; the best way for children to have their own voices heard post-disaster; and the need for disaster-preparedness planning for children in every community, including as vital partners, the leadership of schools that are trusted, recognized and effective.

The International Association of Lab Schools (IALS), and university affiliated schools on several continents,

is a network of such trusted and recognized schools. These could be uniquely placed to assist in times of major disaster, both through learning about how to help children through disasters, as well as providing an actual physical site that is prepared for responding to the needs of children in post-disaster circumstances. The university connection of these schools provides the potential for robust knowledge informed by awareness of local but also international experience. These schools also have a high level of experience in delivery of teaching practices that are both exemplary and innovative, and can be nimble in the face of a call for solid approaches to supporting children in never-before-seen situations. This combination of on the ground strength and a wide vision for the best practices in children's education and growth makes IALS a compelling possibility for partnering with communities in need of these skills in post-disaster work with families and children.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was conducted through participating in *the Great East Japan Earthquake Life Recovery Project: Analysis of Disaster Life Recovery (Hyogo Earthquake Memorial 21<sup>st</sup> Century Research Institute)* and **independently** surveying voluntary evacuees.

Throughout the course of this paper Ms. Elizabeth Morley (FROM Principal Emerita of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School at the University of Toronto) has generously given her time and many invaluable suggestions to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude. My research would have been impossible without her aid and support.

### AUTHORS' BIOS

**Yoko Katsuki** is a professor in the Childhood Education Department of Kobe Shinwa Women's University, Kobe, Japan. She is also the Principal of the university's new lab school, The Shinwa Kindergarten, in Sanda, Japan. She has research interests in social justice, emergency preparedness, health and wellness, and teacher education. She has studied in Hamilton, Canada, and maintains active connections with schools in Canada and the U.S., where she has brings groups of Shinwa University students to gain an international perspective on education.

# Intercultural Reflective Conversations: Fulfilling the mission of laboratory schools in the United Arab Emirates and United States

**Anna Dillon, Ph.D.**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ZAYED UNIVERSITY

**Heather J. Pinedo-Burns, Ed.D.**

DIRECTOR, HOLLINGWORTH PRESCHOOL, TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

## Introduction

Our conversations across the Atlantic came about through our joint connection with the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS), a spirit of collegiality, and a belief in the power of Communities of Practice. These reflective conversations have highlighted some of the strengths and opportunities for growth of our laboratory schools in context. What has become clear is that in order to be competitive and relevant as laboratory schools within the current academic landscape, we must keep the mission of our laboratory schools at the forefront of our minds and be ready to revisit this philosophy as a stimulus for reflection. This paper describes the context of our two learning centers and focuses on our mission statements in relation to the IALS core characteristics of laboratory schools which is guided by the model of Appreciative Inquiry in its broadest sense; particularly highlighting our strengths and aspirations (Lemmerman, Cardenas, Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran, 2007).

### Laboratory Schools—Strengths and Opportunities

According to Johnson (2006), laboratory schools were designed for “research, experimentation, and the training of teachers” (p. 2). By using a research-based approach, laboratory schools have been a feature of the educational landscape and have played an important role in developing and refining new pedagogical approaches (Erickson, Gray, Wesley and Dunagan, 2012). Carnahan and Doyle (2012) see the laboratory school as a community institution, actively contributing to the real world in a collaborative manner. Erickson et al. (2012) point to some reasons why parents like to have their children attend laboratory schools. These include a perception of higher academic standards, the reality of smaller student/ teacher ratios, and the belief that the laboratory school community and academic community work together, thereby

enhancing programs and the attitudes children may have towards entering university. Barza and Essary (2016) noted that parents saw the perceived quality of the teaching staff and location of the lab school on the university campus (therefore in close proximity to their work place or place of study) as reasons to have their children attend a laboratory school. Carnahan and Doyle (2012) see laboratory schools as centers of innovation and point to Dewey’s legacy in this area as he likened laboratory schools to laboratories of biology, physics or dentistry. He saw the laboratory school as having the same purposes as any science laboratory: ‘(1) to exhibit, test, verify and criticize theoretical statements and principles; (2) to add to the sum of facts and principles in its special line.’ (Camp Mayhew and Camp Edwards, 1966, p. 5).

Johnson (2006) highlights that some of the criticisms of laboratory schools have been the funding required to keep them operational, the fact that laboratory schools may not be representative of the public school system, and the fact that laboratory schools cannot cope with the number of teachers in teacher education programs. Depending on the setting, other limitations may include: demands and expectations of faculty, shifts in priorities in institutions with laboratory schools, transient leadership, barriers to research including ethical review boards, the high tuition fees in place in recent years, the constant action including research and college assignments, and a lack of recognition at state level to act as a leader of innovation in pedagogy (Tibbets & McDonald, 2004; Erickson et al., 2012).

By critically reflecting on the mission statement of our laboratory schools in comparison with the core characteristics of laboratory schools outlined by the International Association of Laboratory Schools (<http://www.laboratoryschools.org/>), this paper addresses some of these issues in our contexts.

### Mission Statement of Laboratory Schools

Carnahan and Doyle (2012) recommend that it is advisable to align the mission and activities of a laboratory school with “the overall aims of the sponsoring college” (p. 1). They highlight the importance of acting in accordance with a mission statement as it helps a laboratory school stay “focused, productive, and energized” (p. 2). Mission statements should help laboratory schools to focus efforts, guide expenditures and direction, and increase innovation (p. 3). Former criteria from the National Association of Laboratory Schools (NALS) for the mission of laboratory schools included areas such as the creation of improvements in education through research and experimentation, excellence in clinical and teaching practices, staff development, and student teaching, according to Carnahan and Doyle (2012). While the information regarding NALS is no longer available online, IALS holds curriculum development, educational experimentation, professional development, research and teacher training as the core characteristics of laboratory schools. These are further detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: IALS Core Characteristics of Laboratory Schools

Curriculum Development	School designs and publishes its own curriculum for teaching and learning.
Educational Experimentation	The school has a solid background allowing teachers to carry out innovative projects.
Professional development	There is a solid institutional plan regarding professional development for teachers and staff
Research	School conducts or collaborates in research that upholds a lab school’s important role in education
Teacher Training	The school solidly provides mentorship and assists student teachers during their field experience

Source: <http://www.laboratoryschools.org/> 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016

This provides a useful framework for both of us to explore the mission statements of both learning centers within our individual contexts.

### Context and Mission of the Early Childhood Learning Center, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates

The Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) was established in 2013 with a vision of inspiring excellence in the care and education of young children ([www.zu.ac.ae/eclc](http://www.zu.ac.ae/eclc)). The current Director was appointed as an assistant professor in the College of Education in 2015 and has half-time administrative responsibility for the oversight of the established ECLC on Abu Dhabi campus and the new ECLC on Dubai campus. The ECLC has a capacity of 120 children and a total of 7 classes, ranging in age from 6 months to 4 years. To this end, the ECLC employs 13 teachers, a Head Teacher (formerly operations manager), a Head Nurse (as mandated by the Ministry of Education), 9 classroom assistants and an administrative assistant. 70% of the teaching staff hold Bachelor’s degrees in Early Childhood Care and Education or a closely related field, while the remaining 30% hold Associate Degrees or Certificates in Early Childhood Care and Education. The Head Teacher holds a Master’s degree while the Director holds a PhD. The program runs during the semester on a 7.30-4.30 basis with alternate timing options available to parents. The majority of children at the ECLC are those of students, staff and faculty (in that order) although children from outside ZU community are welcome. The mission statement of the ECLC is as follows:

To provide:

- ① high quality early learning experiences for children and their families
- ② exemplary learning experiences for Zayed University students in a best practice setting
- ③ opportunities for innovative research, and
- ④ community outreach, networking and resource sharing opportunities for the early childhood sector in the UAE and the region.

### Context and Mission of Hollingworth Preschool, Teachers College Columbia, United States of America

Founded in 1983, Hollingworth Preschool is one program of The Hollingworth Center located on the campus of Teachers College, Columbia University. A small preschool with an enrollment of 34–37 children, our mission is dual: to serve children and their families by providing enriching educational experiences while also offering professional development of teachers in collaboration with local, national and international educators. The preschool faculty and staff includes an Executive Director who is the director of The Hollingworth Center, a Preschool Director,



an Admissions & Exmissions Director who also serves as a coordinator for special events, two Head Teachers, four part-time Assistant/Associate Teachers, two part-time Portfolio Teachers, and two part-time Administrative Assistants. All of the faculty and staff of Hollingworth Preschool are either current or former Teachers College graduate students. All of the members of the Leadership Team hold at least a Masters of Arts degree; one head teacher also holds a Masters of Education degree; the Executive Director and Preschool Director both hold Doctorates of Education. As the school is housed in one shared classroom, we have two half-day classes: a morning class of children ages 3-4 which runs from 8:30–11:30 am daily, with an extended day program from 11:30 am–1:00 pm two days a week for all children, and an afternoon class of children ages 4–5 which runs from 11:45 am–4:00 pm Monday–Thursday, and 11:45 am–3:00 pm on Fridays. The school year begins in September and concludes in June. An early admissions notification option is offered to applications of siblings and Columbia University affiliates, which includes students, faculty, and staff. However, most enrolled students do not have a university affiliation. Students come from a variety of neighborhoods throughout Manhattan, and historically have commuted to the preschool from the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

### Questions for Reflection and Methodology

This paper is grounded in the shared experiences of two directors of laboratory schools and a sense of working collaboratively in developing strengths-based reflections within our Communities of Practice (Miller, 1997). Therefore, it is not relevant to frame the conversation and findings within a traditional model. Rather, we seek to highlight the gains that can be made from an openness to share experiences as a stimulus to thinking reflectively. Instead of viewing this from the traditional perspective of a critical friend (Horgan and Bonfield, 2000), it made more sense to see this as a partnership of appreciative friends (Bloom & Martin, 2002).

We decided to frame our conversations within the IALS core characteristics of laboratory schools, outlined in Table 1, and our mission statements, as opportunities for growth within this framework.

### Curriculum Development in both Laboratory Schools

The ECLC runs a bilingual program placing equal value on both English and Arabic. When the center was established, it was decided by the founding team to pur-

chase the Creative Curriculum (Teaching Strategies LLC, 2010) and have teachers trained in its use. Therefore all classes follow the Creative Curriculum, although teachers are encouraged to facilitate learning in ways that may not strictly match the curriculum in order to cater for the specific context and interests of children in the ECLC. The Creative Curriculum follows a program of studies including clothes, buildings, balls, reduce reuse recycle, and trees. All classes explore these study themes at the same time but in a variety of ways. Currently there is no other curriculum development ongoing in the ECLC.

The child responsive curricular philosophy of Hollingworth Preschool is rooted in John Dewey's (1938) belief in experience. Beginning with the child, the teachers believe that children carry a sense of wonder with them into the classroom each day, and their role as educators is to listen to their ideas, embrace their curiosities, and respond to the collective passions of the preschool community. Daily life in the classroom is based on the belief that children learn best through inquiry, through play, and through experience. At Hollingworth Preschool, the teachers approach learning through an interdisciplinary lens, seeking to foster and support students' connections with the world. The work as educators at this university-based lab school is guided by the value placed upon the children's sense of wonder and how the educators work to embrace the curiosities of the individuals of the community within the daily life of the classroom (Huebner, 2008). This curricular approach includes responding to the passions of the educators (Greene, 1973) within the curricular explorations.

### Educational Experimentation in both Laboratory Schools

Due to the nature of the bilingual program offered, co-teaching is an area of experimentation at the ECLC. Most classes are staffed by an English Medium Teacher (EMT), an Arabic Medium Teacher (AMT), and a classroom assistant. In these cases, teachers share responsibility for facilitating learning using play-based developmentally appropriate methods throughout the day. Some classes have bilingual teachers. According to Murphy and Beggs (2010) "Coteaching explicitly brings two or more teachers together to improve what they can offer to the children they teach, while providing them opportunities to learn more about their own teaching" (p. 12). Beninghof (2012) recommends that co-teachers in their specific contexts design their own unique model of co-teaching to meet the needs of their students. Through Appreciative

Inquiry (Magruder, Watkins & Cooperrider, n.d.; Lemmerman, Cardenas, Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005), teachers are encouraged to experiment with various models of co-teaching.

Central to the child responsive pedagogical approach at Hollingworth Preschool, the teachers enact the curriculum through several study topics throughout the school year. The leadership team designs a scope and sequence for each school year selecting engaging topics that provide opportunities for deep inquiry and multiple avenues of exploration. The same study topic explored by two classes may share similar foundations but will be shaped by each group of children's communal interests and inquiries. Therefore, no two studies are alike as they are in response to the experiences, knowledge, wonderings, and the ir passions of the children.

At Hollingworth Preschool, the deep trust and respect for children guide the teachers. The teachers position all children as confident and capable and thereby are willing to engage in studies transporting us back into the long ago and far away. By scaffolding children's learning, the teachers provide the children platforms to establish and bridge connections for our community explorations (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). For example, curricular explorations explore life in Manhattan 400 years ago in an anthropological study of the Lenape; or the teachers and children will travel across the country in a scientific inquiry of the Atlantic Ocean; or join Claude Monet in his garden in Giverny in an aesthetic study of the artists and the impressionist art movement.

## Professional Development in both Laboratory Schools

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) considers that professional development encompasses education, training and technical assistance (2011). Therefore these three aspects of professional development are included in this description of professional development.

The ECLC participates in professional development on a regular basis, usually facilitated by the Director but sometimes by the Head Teacher or an ECLC teacher. ECLC teachers also complete professional development sessions during the University's professional development weeks prior to the start of semester. In 2015, Ministry of Social Affairs introduced a 'Training Plan in the Field of Early Childhood' (available through private correspondence). This training plan is now mandatory for all staff working in the sector and amounts to either 18 or 30 hours of training, depending on the staff member's initial qualification and its relationship to early childhood care and education. The training plan includes a mandatory six hours of pediatric first aid training, a mandatory six hours of child protection training, and a further six hours of approved training, which can be in a range of areas such as: health, safety, nutrition, social and emotional development, early literacy, learning environments, guidance and discipline, inclusion and special needs, brain development, observation and assessment, parent relationships, classroom management and early intervention. Currently the team is using a systematic

Table 2: Undergraduate assignments completed in the ECLC

College	Course	Type of Assignment
Education	Infancy and Early Childhood Development	Case Study (regular observation and note-taking)
Education	Early Childhood Math and Science	Microteaching Observation checklists
Education	Early Childhood Program Models	Observation of environment
Education	Parents as Educators	Development of developmentally appropriate parent information materials
Education	Integrated Curriculum for Early Childhood	Observation of environment
Education	Literature for Children	Readalouds with small groups
Colloquy	Life Skills	Volunteering
Business	Introduction to Marketing	Designing a marketing plan for the ECLC

approach to peer observation by engaging in Appreciative Inquiry (AI). It actively seeks what is right in an organization by taking a strengths-based approach, rather than taking a traditional problem-solving approach or deficits-based approach (Magruder, Watkins & Cooperrider, n.d.; Lemmerman, Cardenas, Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005).

Professional development is an essential element of Hollingworth Preschool, as teacher turnover is built into the model of this lab school. The Assistant/ Associate teachers currently remain at the preschool between one to three years. A few teachers have remained on the faculty for five or more years when pursuing an advanced degree. Professional development begins in August, with typically two weeks dedicated to a variety of topics to support the teachers' entrance to the community and understanding of the approach of the school. Led by the Leadership Team composed of the Director and two Head Teachers, the teachers engage in workshops exploring topics such as 'Philosophical Foundations', 'Respect for Children', 'Invitations to Play', 'Intentionality and Metacognitive Thinking', 'Assignments', 'Art', and 'Song at Hollingworth', as well as workshops focusing on matters of health and safety such as CPR, food allergy awareness, and health and safety.

Hollingworth Preschool's child-responsive approach seeks to strike a balance between child-selected/ child-designed activities and teacher-developed, teacher-directed units of study. This combination affords each child the opportunity to explore individual interests while gaining exposure to a wide variety of ideas and perspectives, and for the educators to carry their own passions and interests into the community inquiry of the classrooms. Therefore, within the professional development workshops the leadership team seeks to provide the teachers with opportunities to engage in wonder as well (Huebner, 2008). Situated in New York City, the leadership team creates opportunities for the teachers to explore some of the aesthetic resources that are unique to teaching in the city (Rancière, 2000, 2004). Each school year the teachers travel to a variety of aesthetic cultural institutions, as a central element of professional development. The aesthetic resources include establishments such as museums, and extend beyond, influenced by Jacques Rancière's (2000, 2004) conception of aesthetic as possible in the everyday actions of individuals and in communities. Past visits include exhibits at Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the New York Historical Society, the New York Botanical Gardens, and to Central Park for bird watching through the Central Park Conservancy.

Professional development continues throughout the school year with weekly team planning as well as full faculty meetings. The faculty meeting schedule typically takes a three cycle including: traditional faculty meetings, classroom care, and professional development. Typically the teachers meet for full day professional development once in January and for one week in June.

## Research in both Laboratory Schools

All kinds of research projects are welcomed to the ECLC, while certain areas of child development are highlighted as research priorities. Research proposals are first approved by the University Institutional Review Board and then are reviewed by the ECLC Research Review Committee, which comprises the Director, Head Teacher, Head Nurse and a rotating ECLC teacher. When reviewing proposals, the ECLC Research Review Committee considers the following areas: degree of disruption of student routine, degree of divergence from curriculum objectives, assessment of the importance of the research in terms of compatibility with ECLC research priorities, potential stress for participants, and compatibility with other ongoing research projects. There are currently four research projects ongoing in the ECLC in the areas of health and nutrition, co-teaching in a bilingual environment (Dillon, 2015; 2016), discourse analysis for understanding Arabic learning in context, and the impact of work experience in the ECLC on undergraduate students. Other research projects have been completed regarding parents' support of the ECLC as a laboratory school (Barza & Essary, 2016) and sight words in Arabic (Zoghbor & Palfreyman, 2015).

As a demonstration program at Teachers College, Columbia University, Hollingworth Preschool is actively involved in the research and dissemination of innovative, child-responsive pedagogy. The leadership team shares the work of Hollingworth Preschool at local, national, and international conferences. Hollingworth Preschool hosts many visitors throughout the school year, including Teachers College graduate students, local, national and international educators and administrators.

## Teacher Training in both Laboratory Schools

The ECLC is intrinsically linked with the College of Education where mainly local Emirati students complete Bachelor's degrees in education. The Director teaches classes in areas related to early childhood care and education. Student teachers are invited to complete practicum



in the center and regularly complete class assignments there. There is a teaching room in the ECLC that can host groups of less than 24. Every semester at least two sections attend classes in the ECLC each week. There are some courses that are closely linked with the ECLC. There is also further outreach in terms of other colleges utilizing the ECLC as a site for assignments. Table 2 outlines these courses and the types of assignments that are carried out.

The ECLC also offers a Program of Learning for parents, students, staff and faculty in the form of fortnightly workshops. Some workshops, given by teachers, have included a variety of areas related to early childhood care and education and research-based talks where faculty members present findings from recent publications. This was inspired by and modeled on Stanford's Bing Nursery School's series of high-quality Coffee Talks<sup>1</sup>. Education students who attend these can earn extra credit for courses. Workshops are provided by ECLC teachers and Zayed University faculty.

Hollingworth Preschool is housed within the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. The Executive Director, Director, and Head Teachers are active in the department teaching courses and/or serve as teaching assistants. Students from a variety of disciplines and departments regularly request to observe in the classroom. The assistant and associate teachers are encouraged to complete required coursework at the school when appropriate.

## Reflections on Core Characteristics of Laboratory Schools

Carnahan and Doyle (2012) undertook an interesting crosswalk looking at the intersection between the host university's mission and the laboratory school's mission. It was decided to use this format to highlight where the IALS Core Characteristics intersect with our mission statements. This will help in identifying areas where the mission statement may be modified or suggestions may be offered to IALS in looking at the core characteristics of laboratory schools.

Table 3 (page 20) shows the ECLC's crosswalk between IALS core characteristics and the ECLC's Mission.

It can be seen in Table 3 and Table 4 that although both of our laboratory schools engage in a number of similar activities that are not reflected fully in our mission statements. One glaring area of omission on the part of the ECLC is that of professional development. Although it is clearly a priority of the ECLC in terms of what we do, it is not reflected in the mission statement. This needs to be amended. Another thing that the ECLC does is

provide opportunities for students to volunteer in the center, whether they are education students or not. This is not reflected in the mission statement at all and begs the question of whether or not this is something we should continue to do. If it is, then it should also be included in the mission statement. Providing community outreach is a key part of the mission in the ECLC, in a way that is linked with research at times, but as workshops for parents and other early childhood professionals at other times. I was surprised to find that this was not listed as a core characteristic of laboratory schools by IALS. An area in which the ECLC could improve in is the area of curriculum development. Experimentation is not included in our mission statement but as that it something that is encouraged, it may be time to add this piece.

A key area in need of development at Hollingworth Preschool is research. While the members of the Leadership Team actively engage in both on-site and off-site professional development and present at conferences, the quantity of research conducted at the school is quite limited. In recent years, the Director has published two book chapters. A greater focus on research would align the school with the core characteristics of IALS. In reviewing our mission statement, we realized the absence of family education. Offering family workshops and supporting our families' understanding of early childhood development is a central facet of our work. The Leadership Team could consider adding family education when reviewing the mission statement.

## Reflection

Tschannen-Moran, Tschannen-Moran and Lemmerman (2015) found in their study that "instead of attending to the wounds of what was going wrong, the process evoked new possibilities for constructive change by attending to the dimensions and nuances of what was going right" (p. 3). As they grow and develop, these conversations can become a form of emancipatory knowing. This is described by Gurm (2013) as knowing which "critically examines the context or the environment in which the teaching and learning experience occurs" (p. 4) and it is developed through action in and on reflection. The process of engaging in emancipatory knowing can be likened to Appreciative Inquiry, which is the strengths-based model our conversations are grounded in.

### ***ECLC's reflection on Hollingworth Preschool—Strengths and Aspirations***

This section outlines our individual reflection on each other's laboratory schools, focusing on the strengths of

Table 3 Crosswalk of the IALS Core Characteristics and the ECLC Mission Statement

	Learning experiences for children and their families	Learning experiences for Zayed University students	Opportunities for innovative research	Community outreach, networking and resource sharing	Other (not included in ECLC mission)
	ECLC Mission				
Curriculum Development					
Educational Experimentation	Co-taught bilingual model				
Professional development					MoE plan being implemented with CoE funds. PD provided by Director and CoE faculty. AI starting across ECLC classes
Research			4 ZU projects underway, 2 completed. Systems in place (ECLC Research Review Committee)	Research presentations at conferences and articles in journals	
Teacher Training		Practicum, class assignments for 6 education courses and 2 non-education courses			
Other (not included in IALS characteristics)		Student worker program—students volunteering in ECLC from across the colleges		Program of Learning including practical workshops and research-based talks. Invitations issued to ZU community including parents and other early childhood learning centers.	

IALS Core Characteristics of Laboratory Schools

each school as well as the aspirations we have based on what we have seen.

With regard to curriculum development, the emphasis on child-responsiveness stands out. Responding to the child’s natural sense of wonder is key in early childhood care and education and I feel that being attached to a specific curriculum may limit that responsiveness. I would like to further explore how we can use the Creative Curriculum (Teaching Strategies LLC, 2010) as a foundation but encourage more child-led learning without any preconceptions. I also particularly liked the way a key tenet of Hollingworth Preschool is the trust in and respect for children. While this may be implied in our approach to teaching and learning in each classroom in the ECLC, I would like to see this belief vocalized and enacted by all teachers within our center. I enjoyed considering the opportunities presented by the model of teacher turnover that is built-in to Hollingworth’s program. The idea of having permanent ‘Master’ teachers who are trained and experienced in mentoring and coaching is most appealing, particularly in a center where many recent undergraduates want to gain experience. It would be interesting to see how that model would work in this context. The teacher profile is quite different across our centers in terms of qualification level and experience. There are pros and cons to level of qualifications and levels of experience. I plan to encourage ECLC educators to use their passions to great effect in their pedagogy, as encouraged in Hollingworth Preschool. I would like to harness the power of exploring aesthetic resources as

a component of professional development within our university and beyond as we live in a unique cultural hub including The Louvre Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Heritage Village Abu Dhabi and other such places. Including these as a part of professional development would surely awaken the passions of our educators.

**Hollingworth Preschool’s reflection on ECLC— Strengths and Aspirations**

While there is much I am curious about with the work of ECLC, in particular, two facets of ECLC program, the integration of the program within Zayed University and the positioning of ECLC as a vital site for research, are of particular importance. While many students come to Hollingworth Preschool to observe for course assignments, it is rare that students will engage in a practicum assignment or student teaching at the preschool. It would be helpful to learn how the ECLC and Zayed University negotiate the needs of both programs and the supports offered through more formal established student placements. Also, as addressed earlier, research at Hollingworth Preschool for the intention of publication is quite limited. This is an area we would like to see developed with time and focused effort. It will be supportive to better understand the process for research at ECLC in more detail, to consider how we might invite more research and/or plan for teacher/research studies in more formal ways. Through continued collaborative intercultural conversations, I suggest we will benefit from seeing each

Table 4 Crosswalk of the IALS Core Characteristics and the Hollingworth Preschool Mission Statement

	Enriching Educational Experiences for Young Children Professional development	Opportunities for Educators as a Demonstration Model Program	Other
	Hollingworth Preschool Mission Statement		
Curriculum Development	Child Responsive Curriculum	Child Responsive Curriculum	
Experimentation		Child Responsive Curriculum	
Professional development		Professional development Workshops for teachers	Family Workshops & Education
Research		Conference Presentations	
Teacher Training		Host Graduate Student Visitors	

facet of the IALS core characteristics anew through our different perspectives.

## Next Steps and Future Directions

There are opportunities for us to revisit the mission statement in both laboratory schools ensure that they reflect the services we provide and our aspirations for the services provided. This should, according to Carnahan and Doyle (2012), help us continue to be motivated, focused, innovative, productive, and energized. According to Josviak and Vera (2016), Cuchiara “cautions that a laboratory school cannot be everything to everyone” (p. 15). With further conversations with the Community of Practice of other laboratory schools, it would be interesting to complete a number of other crosswalks between IALS core characteristics and mission statements. If there are areas such as parental involvement or community outreach that continue to be highlighted by other laboratory schools, it may be of value to work with IALS in re-defining the core characteristics to reflect the missions of laboratory schools. Josviak and Vera (2016) found that “there is no single formula for what makes a university laboratory school sustainable” (p. 16). They note that no single mission statement will ensure a school’s sustainability over time. This highlights the need for reflection on action and reflection in action. With our appreciative friends in the network of laboratory schools within IALS and beyond, we can work on ways to make our missions relevant to best practice in early child care and education in laboratory schools in a way that meets the needs of institutions as they change, 21<sup>st</sup> century children, the needs of teachers and parents, in a way that continues to honor aesthetics and the aesthetic element of teaching and learning.

## REFERENCES

- Barza, L. and Essary, J. (2016). Parents’ Support of a Laboratory Nursery School in the United Arab Emirates. *Global Summit on Childhood 2016—Association for Childhood Education International*, San Jose, Costa Rica.
- Beninghof, A. M. (2012). *Co-Teaching That Works: Structures and Strategies for Maximizing Student Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bloom, J. L., & Martin, N. A. (2002). Incorporating appreciative inquiry into academic advising. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*, 4(3).
- Camp Mayhew, K and Camp Edwards, A. (1966). *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School at the University of Chicago 1896–1903*. Aldine Transaction: London and New York.
- Carnahan, S. and Doyle, D. T. (2012). College Mission Alignment: Lessons for Laboratory Schools. *NALS Journal* 4(1), article 2. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.ric.edu/nals/vol4/iss1/2>
- Daly, A.J. and Chrispeels, J. (2005). From Problem to Possibility: Leadership for Implementing and Deepening the Processes of Effective Schools. *Journal for Effective Schools* 4(1) 8–25. <http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Problem-to-Possibility.pdf>
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: McMillan.
- Dillon, A. (2016). Teachers’ experiences of bilingual co-teaching in the UAE. *Language in Focus 2016*. Kaya Ramada Plaza, Istanbul, Turkey, 10–12 March.
- Dillon, A. (2015). Bilingual co-teaching in the UAE Kindergarten to enhance speaking skills. *REYLL International Research Conference: Issues of Multilingualism in Early Childhood 0–6*. Roma Tre University, Rome, Italy, 26–27 November. <http://host.uniroma3.it/eventi/REYLL/>
- Erickson, P., Gray, N., Wesley, B. and Dunagan, E. (2012). Why Parents Choose Laboratory Schools for their Children. *NALS Journal*: Vol. 2: Iss. 2, Article 2. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.ric.edu/nals/vol2/iss2/2>
- Greene, M. (1973). *Teacher as stranger*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- Gurm, B.K. (2013). Multiple Ways of Knowing in Teaching and Learning. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 7(1). <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijst/v7n1.html>.
- Horgan, K. and Bonfield, T. (2000). *Learning to Teach Reflectively*. Limerick: Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College.
- Huebner, D. E. (2008). *The lure of the transcendent: Collected essays by Dwayne E. Huebner*. (V. Hillis, Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Johnson, W.F. (2006). *The Laboratory School: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of South Carolina.
- Josviak, M. and Vera, D. (2016). Unraveling the Threads that have Preserved University Laboratory Schools: A Qualitative Study on Sustainability. *IALS Journal* 6(1), 13–19. Lemmerman, C.A., Cardenas, J.P., Tschannen-Moran, M. and Tschannen-Moran, B. (2007).
- Revitalizing Schools through Appreciative Inquiry. Paper presented at *NSBA Annual Conference*. [http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/NSBA\\_Handouts.pdf](http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/NSBA_Handouts.pdf)
- Magruder Watkins, J. and Cooperrider, D. (n.d.). *Appreciative Inquiry: A Transformative Paradigm*. <http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/AI-a-Transformative-Paradigm.pdf>
- Miller, J. L. (1997). Disruptions in the field: An academic’s lived practice with classroom teachers. *Counterpoints*, 67, 199–213.
- Murphy, C. and Beggs, J. (2010). A Five-Year Systematic Study of Coteaching Science in 120 Primary Schools. In Murphy, C. and Scantlebury, K. (Eds.) *Coteaching in International Contexts Research and Practice* (pp. 11–34). Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer.
- Rancière, J. (2004). *The politics of aesthetics: The distribution of the sensible*. (G. Rockhill, Trans.). London, England Books Limited. (Original published 2000).
- Teaching Strategies LLC (various authors) (2010). *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. Washington DC: Teaching Strategies LLC

- Tschannen-Moran, M., Tschannen-Moran, B. and Lemmerman, C. A. (2015). Using Appreciative Inquiry to Foster Intergenerational Collaboration for Positive Change in a Struggling School System. *Center for School Transformation* [http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Intergenerational-AI\\_Tschannen-Moran\\_Tschannen-Moran-Lemmerman.pdf](http://www.schooltransformation.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Intergenerational-AI_Tschannen-Moran_Tschannen-Moran-Lemmerman.pdf)
- Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry*, 17(2), 89–100.
- Zoghbor, W. & Palfreyman, D. (2015). Linguistic Criteria for Identifying Sight Words in Arabic for Early Literacy. *The IAFOR International Conference on Language Learning*, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

## AUTHORS' BIOS

**Dr. Anna Dillon** (B.Ed., M.A.(Ed.), PhD) is currently an Assistant Professor in the College of Education at Zayed University, United Arab Emirates. She is also the Director of the Early Childhood Learning Center, the laboratory nursery on campus in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. She teaches courses in early childhood and her research interests include bilingual education, immersion education, co-teaching, and intercultural communication.

**Heather J. Pinedo-Burns** is director of Hollingworth Preschool at Teachers College, Columbia University, a lab school where she guides her children, teachers, and families in a child-responsive program, fostering opportunities for wonder through play, inquiry, and collaboration. She earned a Doctorate of Education from the Department of Curriculum at Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. Previously, Heather attained a Bachelor of Arts in English and secondary education certification from State University of New York, College at Geneseo, and taught middle school English for the Rochester City School District. She currently serves as an adjunct instructor within the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College. Her research interests include early childhood, narrative inquiry, and aesthetics and wonder.

## That's Not Fair! Equality and Justice in Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms

**Sandra Brown Turner**

M.S.ED, DIRECTOR OF THE BARBARA K. LIPMAN EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOOL AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

**Satomi Izumi-Taylor**

PH.D., PROFESSOR AND COORDINATOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION  
AND CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

**Vivian Gunn Morris**

PH.D., PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION AND ASSISTANT DEAN FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES (CEHS) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

"I want to be white so Sean will play with me," said four-year-old Tamika.

James told others, "Let's get away from Mac; he stinks so we don't have to play with him." Mac was born without sweat glands and was not able to perspire. Casimer, a four-year-old boy shouted at Jose who had just moved from Mexico, "You talk funny!! Look at your shirt. What does it say?" Two friends said to Ariel, "How can you have TWO mommies? That's weird!"

These comments were heard at one preschool, but very similar to comments made by young children in many classrooms throughout the country. In the US, demographics are rapidly changing and have an immense impact on how early childhood teachers teach diverse children (Follari, 2015; Morrison, 2015). "Young children tend to think in simple terms, and therefore, easily develop different stereotypes" (Selmi, Gallager, & Mora-Flores, 2015, p. 10). It is the responsibility of early childhood teachers to support children's diverse thinking skills (Hyland, 2010; Morrison, 2015; Selmi et al., 2015; Zakin, 2012).

This paper describes how teachers can expand and challenge young children's perceptions and understanding of diverse classrooms. Teachers can provide opportunities for children to learn to think diversely by addressing the following four issues: culture, language, and fairness; racial identity and fairness; gender identity and fairness; and family structure and fairness (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). For these reasons, this paper will suggest how teachers can promote children's awareness regarding these four issues through the use of children's books, play-

ful activities and responses to children's comments and questions throughout the curriculum. Children's literature serves as the link between what children see and what they understand about the world around them (Sawyer, 2004; Yelland, 2000). Children's books can provide unobtrusive ways to support children's diverse thinking skills (Follari, 2015; Morris, Izumi Taylor, & Wilson, 2000), as they reflect on and reveal our current culture. As shown in Table 1, we provide some books that teachers can use to challenge children's awareness and thinking skills.

Derman-Sparks (2006) reminds us of the importance of anti-bias issues in diverse classrooms during the early childhood years. She states that:

The preschool years lay the foundation for children's development of a strong, confident sense of self, empathy, positive attitudes towards people different from themselves, and social interaction skills. However, pervasive institutional and interpersonal racism and other forms of oppression in our society sabotage healthy development in these areas. Early childhood teachers and parents must help children learn how to resist. (p. 193)

Many adults are unaware that young preschoolers begin to notice differences in other children and adults at an early age, especially physical differences such as skin color, eye shape and hair texture, as well as language differences (Derman-Sparks, 2006). Thus, in order to have an effective anti-bias program in a diverse classroom, professional development in anti-bias strategies must include all staff in the center or school, including teachers,

secretaries, janitors, cooks, and other personnel. It is also critical for parents and families to be aware of and familiar with the anti-bias curriculum from pre-enrollment and throughout the year via regularly planned meetings (Derman-Sparks, 2010; Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan, & Nimmo, 2015; Wolpert, 2006).

### Culture, language and fairness

Culture refers to “how particular groups of people live” (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010, p. 55). When teachers recognize the importance of cultural awareness, they can enhance children’s abilities to understand and appreciate similarities and differences among people from various backgrounds. Cultural awareness is defined as understanding and appreciating others’ “cultures, socioeconomic status, and gender” (Morrison, 2015, p. 55) as well as one’s own culture. In early years, children learn that they belong to a family and a specific culture (Selmi et al., 2015). To learn about various cultures, children and teachers can read books and identify the similarities and differences among words in different languages (Selmi et al., 2015). “Multilingual, anti-racist, and critical” books can help children create a better and more fair world than the one they found” (Lee, 2008, p 172). Such literacy can provide children with opportunities to transform their surroundings into attainable and just environments for all people.

A book entitled *Yoko* (Wells, 1998) might be helpful for children to appreciate different cultures. This story is about a kitty named Yoko who is from Japan who enjoys sushi for lunch at school, but nobody knows about sushi, and they make fun of her. At one preschool, the teacher asked, “Who has eaten sushi before?” Some replied, “No, no way! That’s seaweed, right?” and one child said, “Sushi? My mom eats it but I don’t want to eat it!” The teacher informed the children that they would listen to the story about Yoko, and then the mother of Hayato, a classroom member from Japan, will cook sushi for them for lunch, and they will also participate in making sushi with her. After reading the story, the children talked about sushi and Yoko. One girl related, “I like Yoko because she brought something she loves and found Timothy, a character in the book, who enjoys sushi with her.” Another child said, “My mom likes to eat sushi and different kinds of food so I tasted it.” The teacher asked, “What kind of food do you like the best?” The child replied, “Chinese food!” Other children shouted, “I don’t like it!” Others responded, “I want to try it because I never had it before.” The teacher summed it up by say-

Table 1

Issues	Names of books
Culture, language, and fairness	Yo! Yes? (Raschka, 1993), Everybody bakes bread (Dooley, 1995), Yoko (Wells, 1998). Fish is fish (Lionni, 1970).
Racial identity and fairness	Amazing Grace (Hoffman, 1991), Whoever you are (Fox, 2006), The other side (Woodson, 2001). Bein’ with you this way (Nikola-Lisa, 1994).
Gender identity and fairness	Don’t laugh at me (Seskin & Shamblin, 2002). Jungle dancer (Smith, 2000), Drum, Chavi, drum!/Toca, Chavi, toca! (Dole, 2003).
Family structures and fairness	Salt in his shoes (Jordan & Jordan, 2000), Tell me again about the night I was born (Curtis, 1999). The relatives came (Rylant, 1993). Mrs. Katz and Tush (Polacco, 1992).

ing, “Can we at least try to taste different food? We will have a different guest to cook with us each week so we can learn about different countries’ food.” Because this school was located in a cosmopolitan area, there were many children from various countries and children had ample opportunities to share and experience the wealth of diversity. Another book entitled *Fish is fish*, (Lionni, 1970) in which the author explores how being different is not only tolerated, it is accepted. Some of the kindergarten children identified with being the frog and some with the fish. They discussed how sometimes friendships can change as people change but they all agreed that being different is no reason to not be friends. Acceptance of differences is a root of equality and a precursor to justice.

In addition to reading books that enhance children’s cultural awareness as shown in Table 1, teachers can provide children opportunities to cook different kinds of food from around the world. Teachers invited parents/family members with various cultural backgrounds to cook with children, read books, and eat the food with them. Exposing children to different kinds of food assists them in understanding various cultural practices, family values, and at-



titudes (Branscombe & Goble, 2008; Izumi-Taylor & Rike, 2011). At one preschool, we saw learning about holidays as part of a social studies program. For example, we provided experiences that different families practiced during what we call the “Winter Holidays.” Because of the diversity of children in our classrooms and in the surrounding community, children learned about Kwanza, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Three Kings. In some instances, organizations from the local community representing the cultural/religious groups presented short skits, and shared food and gifts related to their particular celebrations.

### Racial identity and fairness

Racial identity relates to one’s affiliation, culture, language, religion, geography, and physical attributes (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). Teachers need to know children’s cultural backgrounds and their families. When children have opportunities to interact with other children, they learn that there are various cultures and ethnicities (Kindziarski, Leavitt-Noble, Dutt-Doner, Marable, & Wallace, 2013; Selmi et al., 2015). Children need to learn to respect others and understand different cultural rituals and values. Also they should learn some people can belong to more than one ethnic group and participate in multicultural activities (Selmi et al., 2015).

One way to promote children’s awareness of racial identity and fairness is to integrate art and music into the curriculum (Zakin, 2012). Art can enhance children’s feelings about themselves and their surroundings. Teachers can use “a color mixing activity” (Zakin, 2012, p. 6) to promote multicultural awareness in children. Teachers can offer various kinds of paint colors that match each student’s hand color. Children will learn that each kind of color has its own name, such as, “caramel, ebony, cinnamon, and peach, rather than black, white, yellow, and red” (Zakin, 2012, p. 6). At one preschool, children engaged in this activity, enjoying mixing different colors, and made a big painting to show it to their families. In a book entitled *Bein’ with you this way*, (Nikola-Lisa, 1994), the author presents children with a rhythmic sing-along about how everyone is different but also alike. She also guides the children toward acceptance of physical differences and personal preferences as a strength for the whole community. The closing words in the book are, “And we’re gonna be like this all the rest of our live, so come and be with us...we’re on our way! HEY!”

Another activity to further children’s understanding and awareness of racial identity is to read a book entitled *Amazing Grace* (Hoffman, 1991). Prior to reading this

book, a teacher might want to provoke engaged thinking by saying, “We are going to read a story about a very special girl named Grace. Please listen to what happens to her, and we will talk about her after we finish listening.” At one preschool, after the reading, the teacher asked the class members, “What do you think about Grace?” The children’s responses ranged from “She is special,” or “She is good” to signs of appreciation of Grace’s persistence. When one child cried, “Grace couldn’t be Peter Pan because she was a girl and black!” A hush fell over the classroom. The teacher quickly asked, “What do you think of that comment?” Others replied, saying, “That is not right,” “That’s not fair!” and “Uh-uh, She could do it because I went to see Peter Pan at Christmas time and Peter Pan was a girl!” Another child replied, “It doesn’t matter! I saw a girl playing Peter Pan on TV, and you can be whatever you want to be no matter what color you are.” After the discussion, the teacher and children talked about friendships and what they mean. The children all agree that they belong to the classroom community, and that they can be anything they want to be.

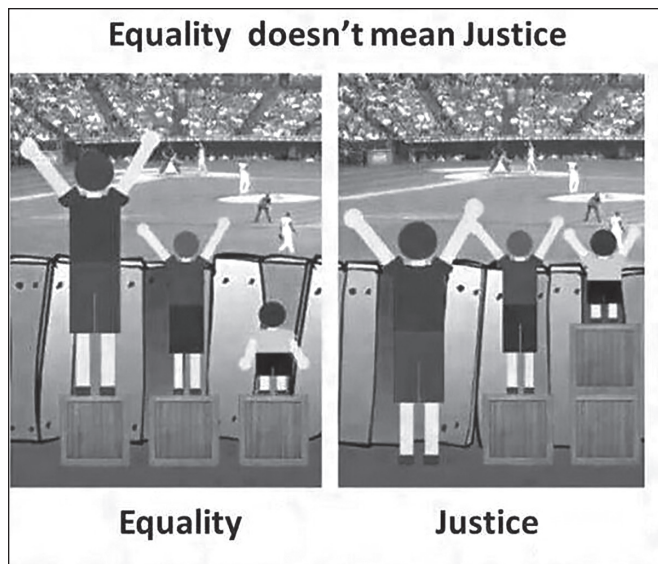
### Gender identity and fairness

In one setting, an early childhood educator (and parent of a preschool boy) shared with an acquaintance an anatomically correct doll to a male parent. His remark was, “The only kind of doll that my son will receive is a G. I. Joe.” The conversation that followed dealt with toys noting both genders and toys that promoted violence. “Diverse gender experiences permeate today’s world” (Selmi et al., 2015, p. 10). Children need adults’ support to form their own gender identity, and during the preschool years, their foundation is developed (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). Children’s identity development can be limited by gender messages that society presents, such as how boys and girls should conduct themselves (Hyland, 2010).

Teachers can offer children opportunities to play dress-up activities, read books on nontraditional gender roles (Mattix & Sobolak, 2014), and to invite parents/family members with cross-gender occupations (Hyland, 2010). At one preschool, teachers invited parents/family members with cross-gender occupations to talk about their work, including a male nurse, female construction worker, female taxi driver, male preschool teacher, male hairdresser, female security guard, and male fashion designer. After these parents’ visits, children and teachers read books on cross-gender occupations again and discussed their experiences. Additionally, teachers can



read books with strong female characters and role models (Mattix & Sobolak, 2014). Such books can contribute “to the image children develop of their own role and that of their gender in society” (Singh, 1998, p. 2).



### Family structures and fairness

Family is an essential part of children’s lives (da Silva, 2014; Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). Through their family lives, children form their identities and learn to view others around them (da Silva, 2014). Children’s aggressive and bullying behaviors are related to familial factors, and children from uncaring and punitive families tend to be bullies in preschools (Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didaskalou, 2011). Each person defines family; teachers can help young children define their place in their families (Nabors & Simpson, 2005). Family members and teachers can work together to build anti-bias programs in any preschools.

Today’s children can observe various kinds of families, including “families headed by a single adult, families of divorced parents, families headed by a relative other than a parent, families headed by gay or lesbian parents, and other types” (da Silva, 2014). Teachers must actively reach out to various kinds of families to work on inclusion for all families (Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan, & Nimmo, 2015).

At one preschool, the children and teacher read a book named, *Mrs. Katz and Tush* (Polacco, 1992). It was a story about a friendship between an African-American boy and an elderly Jewish woman. Prior to the reading, the teacher asked children to look at the cover of the book. She asked, “What did you notice about Mrs. Katz and Larnel? The children replied, “The color of their

hair is different,” “The clothes are different,” “One is a boy and one is a girl,” and “One wears glasses, and their skin is a different color.” Finally a child cried, “One is older!” The teacher asked, “Do you have a friend who is older than you and someone who might be an adult?” All hands went up saying, “I do! I do!” As they talked about the story, a thoughtful child commented, “My mom said that families come in all different kinds and you don’t have to be related to be families. If we care for someone, it’s like a family.” Another child said, “It seems that Mrs. Katz and Lanel are kind of a family because they care about each other.” Teachers can use this book to discuss families and also friendships, respectfulness of other cultures, and fairness to others.

“A family book bag” promotes children’s understanding of families. Each child takes home the family book bag, the family together reads the book, draws pictures or writes about the book in the journal (Derman-Sparks et al., 2015). The child shares his/her story about the book with a teacher’s help, and the teacher models how to respond to the story in a respectful manner. Participating in the family book bag activity encourages “families to read and respond to previous entries” (Derman-Sparks et al., 2015, p. 80).

One example of a book that teachers can place in a family book bag is a book entitled, *The cat in the hat* by Dr. Seuss (1985). This is a story about two children who stayed home one rainy day without their mother. It described how they spent the day with the cat in the hat, making a big mess but having lots of fun. When it was time for their mother to come home, the children were overwhelmed with the mess created by the cat. However, the cat was helpful and magical in cleaning up the mess. At the end of the story, the mother asked the children “What did you do today?” The book also left the story open ended as to what readers would do when confronted with an uncomfortable question. It deals with consequences of one’s behavior and with honesty. The book is fun to read and to teach readers about honesty and openness. The family can read together and talk about these issues. In one kindergarten classroom, the teacher used a bag with a picture of Dr. Seuss and placed the book, a cat in the hat doll, and a journal with a pencil with some characterers from Dr. Seuss books. The children usually took a bag home on Fridays so they would have enough time to read and write or draw about the book in the journal during the week-ends, and returned the bag on Mondays. The children and teacher shared what they thought about the book in class. The discussions followed by this story were endless. Some replied that honesty is best, and others said if the house is

clean, it is okay to say nothing about the cat. Hoping to promote her students' reflection skills, the teacher asked, "Do you have anything else to say about the book?" One thoughtful child cried out, "You should tell your mom that you had the cat in the hat in your home. Tell her how much fun you had but also tell her how messy it was. You can also tell her that the cat cleaned the mess. She might not believe it but you should be honest!"

## Conclusions

John Dewey surmised that the two purposes of education in a society is to socialize the young and to perpetuate the culture. In a classroom a teacher hears, "That's not fair!" a hundred times a day. Perhaps a good lesson in diversity would be to have some solid examples of how fairness does not mean equality which does not mean justice. Fairness and equality are rooted in the law of civilized countries; justice is the outcome when people are mindful about making sure everyone gets to the table. When teachers give children the opportunity to reflect on their classroom experiences, the outcome is that friendships are based on shared memories.

Building community in a classroom depends largely on teachers and parents committing to the building of that community (Alexander, Izumi-Taylor, & Meredith, 2015). Everyone has a life story, especially young children who are assimilating and accommodating their own stories of relationships, belonging, validation, dreams, of who they are as people within the context of other people. Starting the morning circle with the question, "What do you see when you look at me?" can open an interesting discussion. Teachers can give children ways of expressing who they are as individuals, all the while weaving a beautiful tapestry of not just tolerance, but acceptance. Acceptance of oneself begins with family, grows into friendships, and matures as healthy self-respect and confidence (Alexander et al., 2015; DeVries & Zan, 2012; Turner, 2000). In diverse classrooms, teachers have an ethical responsibility to create an environment where life stories are told and heard and expanded in ways where diversity is woven into daily life. Such a classroom should be a respectful and caring community where children are nurtured (Bafumo, 2006; DeVries & Zan, 2012). When students' needs are met, they tend to enjoy the school, to follow the school goals/values, to develop their social skills, and to work at betterment of the school and community (DeVries & Zan, 2012).

Diversity means we are all in this event called life together, and the root of diversity is self-worth. The expan-

sion of diversity is how our beliefs about others formulate from our families and communities, and we all come together to offer the best of ourselves for the common good of everyone. And that begins in early childhood.

## REFERENCES

- Alexander, L., Izumi-Taylor, S., & Meredith, C. (2015). Promoting community spirit in early childhood education classrooms. *Tennessee's Children*, 56(1), 17–22.
- Bafumo, M. E. (2006, August/September). Constructing a community. *Teaching PreK–8*, 37(1), 10–12.
- Branscombe, K., & Goble, C. (2008). Infants and toddlers in group care: Feeding practices that foster emotional health. *Young Children*, 63(6), 28–33.
- Curtis, J. (1996). *Tell me about the night I was born*. NY: Harper Trophy.
- da Silva, A. P. (2014). Supporting gay and lesbian families in the early childhood classroom. *Young Children*, 69(4), 40–44.
- Derman-Sparks, L. (2006). Activism and preschool children. In E. Lee, Menkart, & M. Okazawa-Rey (Eds.), *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K–12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development*, (pp. 193–210). Washington, DC: Teaching for Change.
- Derman-Sparks, L., & Edwards, J. (2010). *Anti-bias education for young children and ourselves*. Washington DC: NAEYC.
- Derman-Sparks, L., LeeKeenan, D., & Nimmo, J. (2015). *Leading anti-bias early childhood programs: A guide for change*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- DeVries, R., & Zan, B. (2012). *Moral classrooms, moral children* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dole, M. (2003). *Drum, Chavi, drum!/Toca, Chavi, toca!* San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Dooley, N. (1995). *Everybody bakes bread*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda.
- Dr. Seuss (1985). *The cat in the hat*. New York: Random House Children's books.
- Follari, L. (2015). *Foundations in early childhood education: History, theories, and approaches to learning* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson.
- Fox, M. (1997). *Whoever you are*. Orlando, FL: First Voyage Books.
- Hoffman, M. (1991). *Amazing grace*. New York: Mulberry.
- Hyland, N. (2010). Social justice in early childhood classrooms what the research tells us. *Young Children*, 65(1), 82–90.
- Izumi-Taylor, S., & Rike, C. (2011). *Prepare healthy foods with toddlers*. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 39(3), 27–33.
- Jordan, D., & Jordan, R. (2000). *Salt in his shoes*. Nelson, NY: Scholastic Inc.
- Kindzierski, C., Leavitt-Noble, K., Dutt-Doner, K., Marable, & Wallace, N. (2013). Teaching tolerance with mix it up! Student reactions to an unusual lunch period. *Childhood Education*, 89(1), 15–18.
- Lee, N. (2008). Equality and literacy: The challenge of the decade. In E. Lee, Menkart, & M. Okazawa-Rey (eds.), *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K–12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development*. Washington, DC: Teaching for Change.

- Mattix, Ap., & Sobolak, M. (2014). The gender journey in picturebooks: A look back to move forward. *Childhood Education, 90*(3), 229–233.
- Morris, V. G., Izumi Taylor, S., & Wilson, J. (2000). Using children's stories to promote peace in classrooms. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 28*(1), 41–50.
- Morrison, G. (2015). *Early childhood education today 13th ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Nabors, D., & Simpson, C. (2005) Drawings on the Wall: Children's insights for defining diversity. *Dimensions of Early Childhood, 33*(2), 11–16.
- Nikolas-Lisa, W. (1994). *Bein' with you this way.* New York: Lee and Low Books Inc.
- Raschaka, C. (1993). *Yo! Yes?* New York: Scholastic.
- Rolacco, P. (1992). *Mrs. Katz and Tush.* Toronto, Canada: Sierra Club.
- Rylant, C. (1993). *The relatives came.* NY: Aladdin.
- Sawyer, W. E. (2004). *Growing up with literature.* New York: Hodge Podge Books.
- Selmi, A., Gallagher, R., & Mora-Flores, E. (2015). *Early childhood Curriculum for all learners.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seskin, S., & Shamblin, A. (2002). *Don't laugh at me.* Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press.
- Singh, M. (1998). *Gender issues in children's literature* (Report No. ED424591-00-00). Bloomington, IN: Eric Clearinghouse on Reading and English Communication. Retrieved from ERIC database.
- Smith, C. (2000). *Jingle dancer.* NY: Morrow.
- Turner, S. (2000). Caretaking children's souls. *Young Children, 50*(1), 31–33.
- Vlachou, M., Andreou, E., Botsoglou, K., & Didaskalou, E. (2011). Bully/victim problems among preschool children: a review of current research evidence. Retrieved from: <http://link.springer.com/articles/10.1007/s10648-011-9153-z/fulltext.html>
- Wells, R. (1998). *Yoko.* New York: Scholastic.
- Wolpert, E. (2006). *Redefining the norm: Early childhood anti-bias strategies.* In E. Lee, Menkart, & M. Okazawa-Rey (Eds.), *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K-12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff Development, (pp. 198-210).* Washington, DC: Teaching for Change.
- Zakin, A. (2012). Hand to hand: Teaching tolerance and social justice one child at a time. *Childhood Education, 88*(1), 3–13.
- Woodson, J. (2001). *The other side.* NY: G.P.
- Yelland, N. (2000). *Promoting meaningful learning: Innovations in educating early childhood professionals.* Washington, DC: NAEYC.

## AUTHORS' BIOS

**Sandra Brown Turner**, M.S.Ed. is director of the Barbara K. Lipman Early Childhood School and Research Institute at the University of Memphis. She is past president of the Memphis AEYC, TAEYC Board member, and served as a NAEYC Accreditation Commissioner under the original accreditation process. She is the immediate past president of the International Association of Laboratory Schools. Her research interests are curriculum development, child development, diversity and peace education design and implementation.

**Satomi Izumi-Taylor**, Ph.D. is Professor and Coordinator of Early Childhood Education with the Department of Instruction and Curriculum Leadership at the University of Memphis, Tennessee. Her research interests include cross-cultural studies of teacher education, play, constructivism, infant and toddler development, and science education.

**Vivian Gunn Morris**, Ph.D. is Professor of Education and Assistant Dean for Faculty Development and Graduate Studies in the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences (CEHHS) at the University of Memphis. Her research interests include early childhood education, teacher education, family involvement in education, and educating African American children.

## Seamless Sustainable Synergy: Relationships that Serve the Greater Good

**Cheryl A. Slattery, Ed.D.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF TEACHER EDUCATION/LITERACY AT SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY, PA

---

In and of itself, being in a human service profession such as teacher education means I am not a stranger to the word service. Service, a helpful activity, is the foundation of many professions and organizations, as well as an expectation. Taking pride in serving the community is often the development of the greater good. Relationships that can be crafted through service represents a building block for professional growth. By serving, participation in the relationship is a win-win situation.

Being a teacher educator at a university with a laboratory school lends itself to opportunities for service. Service learning; henceforth, is a strategy for teaching and learning that embeds instruction and reflective practices in meaningful community service. Service learning provides the opportunity to apply learning concepts and skills into a real-world situation; furthermore, developing the ability to work well with others, and building pedagogical skills as well as communication and alliance. It strives to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen the teacher education-laboratory school relationship, where the identity of the relationship is synergized by the strength of its individual contributors.

In a laboratory school, first and foremost, there exists opportunities for observing best practices in teaching as well as offering opportunities to undergraduate pre-service teachers to navigate the implementation of best practices in teaching. For me, those opportunities stem from collaborations within and around the entity of the laboratory school embedded in the context of educating children. The collaboration involves various people, starting with the teacher education department and moving into the laboratory school, who share the common characteristics of contributing to the greater good. Those characteristics include inspiration, care, drive, and hard work.

I teach future teachers. Similar to all teaching situations, it is exciting and challenging work. The demands of teaching content and pedagogy in the college classroom; however, can be supported when that college classroom is partnered with a laboratory school.

Supporting the value of intense and detailed planning and successful implementation of best practices in teaching, this relationship allows those involved to contribute

to school success for children, and engages all those enthralled to seamlessly sustain a synergism that could not be created otherwise.

### **The colossal perk of the job**

The relationship between teacher educators and laboratory school teachers has a common denominator... children. The fundamental purpose of the relationship is to enhance the edification of children.

The mission of laboratory school teachers working collaboratively with teacher educators who instruct undergraduate pre-service teachers is to serve the larger school community by working to improve instructional practices and techniques in education. This is accomplished through the maintenance of a partnership between teacher educators and laboratory school teachers, something that I have found to be an essential element of my professional responsibilities.

This synergy embraces the opportunity for undergraduate pre-service teachers to connect with in-service teachers, children, and other professionals within the laboratory school community.

### **A two-lane road to success**

One of the most critical aspects of educating children is the teaching of reading and writing. The educational paradigm is rooted in literacy instruction, and occupies its core. More specifically, in my relationship with the laboratory school, one aspect is to service struggling readers and writers throughout the laboratory school community by delivering individualized literacy intervention sessions within a balanced and comprehensive literacy framework. It is a relationship to support children in their literacy learning as well as support pre-service teachers' understanding and delivery of literacy intervention.

The design is to provide targeted, data driven, intervention to children who struggle with literacy. Children who are in need of additional literacy support are serviced directly and explicitly through an undergraduate literacy course. Through instructional planning and implementation

of literacy intervention sessions for struggling readers and writers, an intervention model is echoed from the teacher education classroom to the laboratory school classroom where a population of struggling readers may be found.

This experience initially forges then ultimately develops the positively productive relationship between the university, pre-service teachers, and laboratory school teachers, with new knowledge about the explicit instruction on the elements of a balanced and comprehensive literacy framework which are important to developing proficient readers and writers.

Applying already learned course content in balanced and comprehensive literacy instruction to a laboratory school-based program to work with children in real time, allows the undergraduate pre-service teachers to gain valuable experience working with young children struggling during their early stages of literacy development. This further provides a service to the school community which benefits children first hand. This relationship, sustained for more than a decade, has crafted a powerful feeling of accomplishment in contributing to the greater good.

This is the win-win situation.

Having expertise in a certain area, in this case, literacy education, coupled with identifying a need in that area, teacher educators in collaboration with laboratory school teachers can synergize and become advocates for the larger school community. Settings outside of a traditional face-to-face college classroom provide a new perspective on “learning”. Working with children to supplement their core literacy instruction in the classroom often makes a difference. Strategies can be retaught, reinforced, and fine-tuned for the proper fit, all the while providing the undergraduate pre-service teacher with an experience that cultivates a greater understanding of the concepts of sound literacy instruction.

### **Essence of unity**

Undergraduate pre-service teachers take their cumulative knowledge in the area of literacy instruction and integrate that knowledge into the real world through the implementation of instructional techniques and activities with children. This enhances the use of best practices learned in the college classroom and subsequently observed in the laboratory school classroom.

This area of literacy intervention translates into what the school community needs at the time. And via the relationship, the service learning is provided.

Working as a teacher educator at a university with a laboratory school means striving to seamlessly sustain

the synergy that currently exists between the two entities. A synergy of the greatest kind. Yet, it is a function of the relationship that is never finished. Each year brings change and varied circumstances. There will exist new necessities, different schedules, more special events, changed stances, and novel weaknesses of children which will need attention. The reward, nonetheless, encompasses a continuous cycle of learning through collaboration and service, and a collegial respect between the teacher educator and the laboratory school teacher all for the betterment of the greater good.

It is a relationship that I prefer to never live without.

### **AUTHORS' BIOS**

**Dr. Cheryl A. Slattery** has been teaching in higher education for fourteen years, and previously taught for fifteen years as a sixth-grade teacher, Instructional Support teacher, Reading Recovery teacher, and Reading Specialist. Dr. Slattery's university coursework includes, most notably, English language learners, reading measures and intervention, content area reading, and advanced diagnosis in reading. Her research interests include home-school-community partnerships and family literacy, best practices in the classroom, the struggling reader and school readiness, the school to prison pipeline, and social justice through social media. During her tenure, she has worked collaboratively with undergraduate pre-service teachers, graduate in-service teachers, local school districts, and the Grace B. Luhrs University Elementary School on the campus of Shippensburg University, to impart best practices in the area of literacy instruction and intervention.

## Book Reviews

**Elizabeth Morley**

PRINCIPAL EMERITA OF THE DR. ERIC JACKMAN INSTITUTE OF CHILD STUDY LABORATORY SCHOOL  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

---

### **A University's Challenge—Cambridge's Primary School for the Nation.**

*Peter Gronn and James Biddulph, (eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2016.*

The University of Cambridge, Great Britain, opened a new chapter in its remarkable history of contributions to education when its new elementary school welcomed its first students in 2015. The school was born of several missions, among these to sit at the intersection of theory and practice in the education of young children. The nature of this role for the university is clearly and invitingly outlined in this recent volume, which tells the story of the Cambridge University Primary School from concept through the challenges and rewards of realizing the dream of “The Nation’s School”. First, here are answers to any who wonder what drives the creation of a laboratory for learning, a school on a university campus. Second, it is a book for teachers, policy makers,

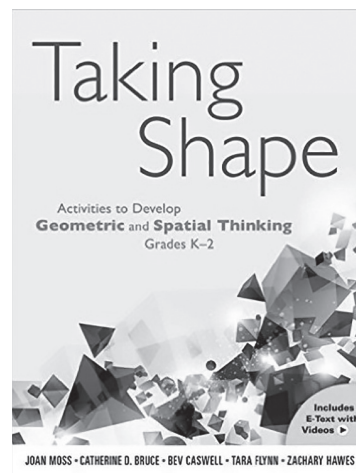
and teacher education professionals and administrators. It gives theory-inspired analysis of the opportunities and importance of such a school within its community, country and international reach. This work is scholarly, accessible, and compelling. When we hear the voice of the first Head of School, James Biddulph, we hear a message for all in the International Association of Laboratory Schools. He tells us how an innovative primary school is addressing the learning needs of its pupils while taking a place in policy-making, teacher training and research. It is a chronicle of recent and powerful university school experience that is a rare and welcome mix of candor, encouragement and promise.



## **Taking Shape: Activities to Develop Geometric and Spatial Thinking, K to 2.**

***Joan Moss, Catherine D. Bruce, Bev Caswell, Tara Flynn and Zachary Hawes. Pearson Press, 2016.***

This book brings teachers behind the scenes of an innovative research study called Math for Young Children (M4YC) which grew around tables at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto. From the beginning, the Early Years teachers at the Laboratory School were integral to the project, meeting with researchers, participant teachers, and administrators to share in Lesson Study-inspired math teaching and professional growth. The importance of Spatial Reasoning to student capacity in all areas of Mathematics is upheld in widely cited research. With this in mind, the researchers and teachers of M4YC set out to find the very best ways to increase spatial competencies in pupils from Kindergarten to Grade 2. This handbook addresses through clear classroom examples how and why its lessons make a difference to students. Of particular salience for readers of the International Association of Laboratory Schools Journal are the book's roots in Lab School outreach. Former Lab School teachers Joan Moss and Bev Caswell, now professors and researchers, returned to the Lab School, inviting a collaboration which grew to include a wide network of participant teachers, many of who work in and with First Nations communities in Canada. It is a book to guide and inspire others to tell their story, and to teach Math with lasting and robust outcomes.



### **AUTHORS' BIOS**

**Elizabeth Morley** is Principal Emerita of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School at the University of Toronto. She is Visiting Scholar at Kobe Shinwa University in Kobe, Japan, and Honorary Principal of its new Lab School, The Shinwa Kindergarten. Elizabeth writes monthly reviews for the Klingenstein Centre journal, *Klingbrief*, at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Association of Laboratory Schools.

## Beyond Laboratory Schools: Transforming Lives

NOTES FROM THE IALS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN PUERTO RICO, 2016

### Nicolas Ramos, English Instructor, University of Puerto Rico Laboratory Schools

Laboratory schools are known for their flexibility towards the development of innovative pedagogical practices and research. Their role is fundamental in the field of education. Every year, the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS) holds a conference as a means to fulfill its mission. Teachers and school administrators from the United States and other parts of the world meet to discuss and debate over the best practices in the field of education. Last year, 2016, the annual conference was held in Puerto Rico. Presenters were asked to develop their topics around the following theme: Beyond Laboratory Schools: Transforming Lives. The purpose of the conference was to share teaching practices, innovative projects and research that promoted learning beyond the school grounds. Presenters from schools all over the world were to evidence the pertinence of laboratory schools throughout the entire lives of their students. Delegations from the United States, Canada, Czech Republic, Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, South Africa, Japan and China were featured at this conference.

The conference kicked off with a laboratory school alumni panel. Former students from laboratory schools in Puerto Rico and Canada spoke about the impact that having studied in a laboratory school had in their lives today. We additionally communicated via Skype with an alumnus directly from an operating room in a hospital. He spoke about the atmosphere in a laboratory school and how the teaching practices led him to find his way in life, not only academically, but also emotionally and socially as well. Another alumnus that shared her experiences in a lab school was the mayor of the capital city of Puerto Rico, San Juan. Finally, Simona Messina, an alumnus from a laboratory school in Canada spoke candidly about her delightful learning experiences and how they were still pertinent in her life today.

During the second day of the conference, Dr. Ana Quintero conducted a keynote presentation about the present role of the laboratory schools. She stressed the fact that even when the mission and philosophy of most

schools correspond to what we know about the learning process, very few classrooms follow those principles in practice. “Laboratory schools are pivotal in stretching that gap between theory and practice,” she concluded. To carry the message even further, master classes followed during the afternoon. Dr. Angeles Molina presented a master lesson on early bilingual literacy development and the current challenges and opportunities for teaching. “Currently, there are many implications, challenges and opportunities for bilingual teaching and learning,” Dr. Molina noted. Another master class dealt with action research and how it is not only a professional development activity, but also a window for seeing and understanding the complexity of the act of teaching and learning. Dr. Annette Lopez provided concrete examples of action re-







search and helped the audience understand and prepare ideas for future projects.

This conference had over one hundred attendees and offered more than thirty workshops. One of the most celebrated sessions was conducted by Monika Mandelickova, from the Czech Republic. Monika spoke about the Czech educational system and of the many challenges they face at the moment. Many changes have happened during the last twenty years. Some have been successful and some less successful. “We still need to be focused more on systematical solutions, holistic approach and work on synergies that can promote the improvement of Czech educational system,” she said.

In another workshop, Nicole Romany and Catherine O’Sullivan, from the University of the West Indies Laboratory Schools, addressed the ongoing process of developing university laboratory preschools in three Caribbean countries—Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and Antigua.

They examined how one university with four campuses throughout the Caribbean, created a unique and recognizable practice that supports the development of high quality early childhood education while respecting and addressing each country’s culture and specific needs.

Xiaofeng Kang from Tsinghua International High School in China led another workshop on student engagement and its critical role to their success during learning in a social studies class. He spoke about his research in the area of social studies and the difficulties that students commonly confront. Some possible solutions were addressed. Meanwhile, a group of teachers from the University of Puerto Rico Laboratory Schools presented research and a diverse set of ideas about teaching. María G. Rosado, Ivette Torres, Jaime Abreu and María del C. Currás shared and commented on the results of an investigation they conducted that supports the theory that classroom and school atmosphere is central to the intellectual development of all students during their school years and beyond. Also from Puerto Rico, James Seale, Wanda de Jesús and José Nocua, a group of veteran teachers, shared their approaches to collaborative learning. Rather than identifying “best practices” they examined the messy nuts and bolts of getting kids to learn by working together, mostly out of teachers’ sight and earshot.

The Puerto Rico annual conference is one to be remembered. Not only because of all the important research and innovative teaching practices presented, but also for the diverse background of all participants. Laboratory schools are about learning, yet most importantly, they are about sharing and collaborating as partners for the purpose of developing our young people into the innovators of tomorrow. For this reason, the International Association of Laboratory Schools is proud to be able to host so many relevant and engaging educators from all over the world. We hope to see all of you featured at future conferences!

#### AUTHORS’ BIOS

**Nicolas Ramos** earned a Master of Arts and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Puerto Rico. He is currently an English Instructor at the University of Puerto Rico Laboratory Schools, where he teaches seventh and twelfth grade. His research interests include school violence and learning, bullying and Shakespeare. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for the International Association of Laboratory Schools.



# INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

## Call for Papers—IALS Journal 2017

### Information for Contributors

The *IALS Journal*, a refereed journal, publishes articles that contribute to the knowledge and understanding of laboratory and university affiliated schools and other significant educational issues. Most articles focus on research, innovation, or opinion. The subjects most often addressed are teaching techniques; administrative concerns; functions, history, and the future of laboratory schools; innovations in curriculum and program; teacher education; student growth and development; and philosophical topics. Rebuttals, responses, and book reviews are also considered for publication. Although available space and thematic journals may limit the number of articles published, unsolicited manuscripts are encouraged. Preference is given to articles that link explicitly to laboratory schools.

### Submission Requirements

#### Length

The maximum acceptance length is twenty five pages, including all references and supplemental material.

#### Format

The *IALS Journal* uses the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) *Publications Manual*, for style format. It is vital that all manuscripts submitted for publication conform precisely to this APA style.

#### Submission

Send your submission electronically to the editors of the journal: Dr. Christopher Keyes [cskeyes@ship.edu](mailto:cskeyes@ship.edu) or Dr. Shannon Mortimore-Smith [smortimore@ship.edu](mailto:smortimore@ship.edu). The electronic copy should be written in a current word processing application (twelve point, Times New Roman font, double spaced). For consideration in the 2018 volume of the journal, please submit by **September 24, 2017**.

#### Editing

The *IALS Journal* reserves the right to make editorial changes in all manuscripts to improve clarity, to conform to style, to correct grammar, and to meet space requirements. All submitted articles are reviewed by the Editors to determine acceptability for publication in the *IALS Journal*. During the revision phase, authors should include information concerning their title, position, laboratory school, university name, location, etc. A brief author biography and school overview will be included at the conclusion of each article.

For further information: Questions can be directed to the editors. The editors welcome suggestions from IALS members concerning ways in which the *IALS Journal* may be improved.

---

