

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

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From the Director's Desk

by Rob Dixon

Spring is in the air. We have snow melting, robins arriving and of course your newsletter to keep you abreast on some of the things that are happening at UW-La Crosse. With this newsletter it is always fun to take stock of where we are and where we are going. We have a number of changes on the horizon that we are looking forward to.

NASP continues to dominate the direction that we are heading as we try to look forward to what students will need down the road. This past year, the new NASP Practice Model was released. For those that remember the 11 standards, this new model has 10. It goes beyond a simple reduction of a standard (information technology if you were wondering) and expands other areas. In essence it is the culmination of Blueprint I, II and III. This model is being advanced by NASP as *the* way that school psychology should be practiced in the schools. You can use it to gauge your own practices and use it to advocate for an expanded role. There is also new language on the ratios of students to school psychologists and it advocates for more school psychologists with districts moving to implement RtI and PBIS.

We are in the fortunate position to announce the hiring of Dr. Russell Vaden as a part of our School Psychology faculty. At a time that most programs are forced to “replace” a departing faculty member, we had the luxury to dream big and fill a gap in our collective expertise. Dr. Vaden’s expertise lies in the area of PBIS and collaborative opportunities with schools. I will let him complete the introductions, but know that we are fortunate to have a 4th core member of the school psychology program.

We have taken this opportunity for the revised direction from NASP and the addition of a new faculty member, to sit down and determine what are the essential skills of future school psychologists and how are we going to put that in a package that will take our graduate students to the entry level of the profession. This includes some important changes. First, we are going to expand and add a new class on Core Instruction and Classroom Management. This will essentially be a

Tier I Academic and Behavior Class. It will serve as a foundation for the spring class on Academic and Behavior Interventions that is retooled into a Tier II and Tier III intervention class. Second, we are going to bring back Psychoeducational Assessment II. Rather than have it as a follow up to the original class that teaches IQ and Achievement tests, we are going to place it at the end of the program so that the students will be exposed to more important assessment topics, specifically neuropsychology and culturally competent assessment practices. Finally, we are going to bring forward the Consultation class to the second semester to take advantage of our unique role of providing consultation to teachers in the first practicum. Together with our other curriculum changes that we have conducted in the last few years, we anticipate that students will truly be ready for the leadership position that many find themselves in as the role of the school psychologist expands beyond the sometimes narrow boundaries of gate keeping and special education.

In the process of examining who we are and what we offer to students, we returned to our philosophy of providing a *Practitioner-Scholar* Model of training to our graduates. In light of this, we have begun to see our graduates embrace research that culminates in the presentation to future colleagues at the NASP Annual Convention. These poster projects represent a similar dedication: determining a problem to research, collecting data and then presenting it to peers. We consider this a useful endeavor that brings research into the hands of other practitioners. Coupled with this option to the traditional thesis, students will take a case that they are working on, present it to faculty and defend their choices and conclusions. We have started this process with students that have been languishing in thesis “no man’s land” and have been quite pleased with the results. Therefore, you may see a change in the reporting of our research that takes on a flavor of student research that is presented at NASP or WSPA. We are anticipating having a great showing at our Annual Roundtable where students can showcase their knowledge and enthusiasm for research. Hope to see you there!

Dr. Vaden - Joining UWL School Psychology by Russell Vaden

I will be joining the faculty of the UWL School Psychology program in August, 2011. Recently, I have been a member of the Educational Psychology and Foundations department at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina. There, I have spent the last three years teaching courses in the areas of Learning and Motivation, Psycho-educational Assessment, Child Psychology Applied to School Settings, and Educational Research Methods. I am a member of the National Association of School Psychologists, the International Council for Learning Disabilities, and the National Education Association.



Prior to my experience in higher education, I worked for six years as a School Psychologist in early childhood centers and elementary school settings in both Texas and Louisiana. Having a broad background in evaluation, consultation, and intervention, I am very interested in the contemporary applications of evidence-based intervention design and the evaluation of school-wide initiatives in that area. Regarding interventions, I have served as a state-level and a district-level trainer/consultant in Response-to-Intervention and Positive Behavior Support methodologies. Related to assessment and evaluation, I previously served as the lead clinician for a few years on a multidisciplinary early childhood identification team for cases related to autism, neuropsychological impairment, and mental retardation.

I also have a background in counseling and play therapy. Before my entry into school settings, I worked for three years as a Family Therapist and Crisis Counselor in a community mental health center setting. I am skilled in risk-reduction approaches to behavior modification and the assessment of family contribution to children's resiliency.

Outside of the 9-to-5 work life, I enjoy having fun! It is not at all uncommon to see me playing league volleyball, enjoying outdoor recreation such as biking and hiking, and singing a song or two at karaoke. Travel and adventure are important to me, because (according to Jean Piaget) "play is the language of life."

2011 NASP Conference San Francisco, California by Michelle Anderson, Melanie Hill, and Raechel Torf

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse was well represented at the 2011 National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) annual convention in San Francisco this February. All three professors, all twelve second year students, and one first year student attended the many sessions focused on the theme of positive relationships and how they impact overall school success. Over 5,000 individuals attended the conference and over 1,000 professionals were invited to share research and present on a variety of important topics.

Dr. Dixon and UW-L alum Don Juve presented their research on gender specific education at the high school level. Dr. Newton gave a talk on careers in academia along with other trainers from around the country. As NASP is an exciting opportunity to gain a great deal of knowledge, it was strongly encouraged for students to attend. As traveling to California on a fixed student loan-based income is rather difficult, we worked diligently on fundraising efforts, raising enough money to cover the cost of airfare and hotel fees.



Students and faculty were able to increase their knowledge and skills in areas like resilience in military youth, what to do when death enters your school, how to start a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) in schools, utilizing cognitive behavior therapy in schools, bullying prevention strategies and working with youth offenders (just to name a few.) As usual the big wigs were all in attendance: Richard Woodcock, Mark Steege, etc. The conference allowed students time for networking, presenting our own research, and even interviewing for current job openings! Students took advantage of an array of sessions and disseminated this newly obtained knowledge through class discussions, written essays, and a roundtable discussion with first year students when we returned.

The keynote speaker, Linda Darling-Hammond, is an education policy specialist that works with the federal government, serving as policy advisor to the president. Within the past decade, she was named one of the ten most influential individuals in U.S. education policy, as a leading expert in school reform, teacher quality, and education equity. The focus of her talk was on the essential role that school psychologists have the ability to implement in working with policy makers. She emphasized the importance of authentic assessments and the integration of cultural competence throughout all aspects of curriculum. As school psychologists, we need to work closely with administrators and legislators to advocate for comprehensive education for all students and move away from teaching toward tests.

One of the biggest highlights of the trip was the presentation of research by 10 of the second year graduate students. These students applied and all 10 were accepted to present their original research. This is not an easy feat. It was quite a sight to see so much UW-L representation at a national conference. Students even received accolades from other university professors as well as from graduate students from other universities. Students presented posters on topics including relational aggression, multicultural competence, mental health, grading policies, and gifted and talented students.

The conference wasn't all work, as attendees were able to explore the city of San Francisco. Highlights from these adventures included Fisherman's Warf, Golden Gate Park, and a fabulous dueling-piano bar. Overall, it was a fun filled week of professional development, tourism, and bonding with peers. Next year's conference will be in Philadelphia. It is anticipated that Philly will be just as fun, educational, and UW-L will continue to have a significant presence at the conference.

Rob Dixon Named New NASP Delegate from Wisconsin

Elections were held this spring for a new NASP delegate to replace Dr. Milt Dehn, former UWL School Psychology Director. Milt served two terms (6 years) as our Delegate. Rob will assume the duties of the Delegate in July for the next three years. So for those that are NASP members, you will be receiving email updates from Rob instead of Milt. For those that are not members, one of the duties of the Delegate is to develop and expand the NASP membership in the state. So expect to hear from me!

Symposium Presentation - NASP 2010

- Alum, Chelsea McColley
Data-Based Decision-Making in Preschool:
Promoting Early Academic Success

Paper Presentation - NASP 2011

- Dr. Robert Dixon & Alum, Don Juve
Gender-Based Instruction: Exploring the
Impact in High School

Symposium Presentation - NASP 2011

- Dr. Joci Newton
Careers in Academia: Perspectives and
Insights From Faculty

Poster Presentations - NASP 2011

- **Current second year students:**
 - Michelle Anderson, Factors of Resiliency and Depression in Adolescents
 - Kelly Blackburn, Parent Involvement Within Hmong Families
 - Angela Goethel, Parent, Teacher, and Self-Perceptions of Gifted Students' Social Skills
 - Maureen Hampton, Social Predictors of Adolescent Involvement in Relational Aggression
 - Melanie Hill, Grading Practices Differences in Secondary Teachers
 - Ashley Morris, The Effects of Parental Attachment and Gender on Cyberbullying
 - Emilie Ratter, Reactive Attachment Disorder: A Needs Assessment of School Psychologists' Knowledge
 - Stephanie Sabinash, Differences in the Multicultural Competence of School Psychologists
 - Marie Schmidt, Student-Teacher Relationships Examining Connections to Relational Aggression
 - Jenna Semling, Special Education and Regular Education Teachers' Perceptions of School Psychology
 - Raechel Torf, Knowledge and Skills of School Psychologists Regarding Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

20-, 10- & 5-year Reunion

We are continuing our six-year tradition of encouraging graduates from certain years to attend Roundtable to see fellow classmates. This is a wonderful way to start reunions and renew friendships, fellowship, and maybe even a little “shop-talk” about how things are going for you in your schools.

20-year (1991 grads) alumni: Stace Anderson, Scott Bruns, Wendy Guzzeta, Leisa Fergot, Eric Jensen, Debra Morse, Denise Oien, Douglas Olsen, Susan Williams and Stephanie Fogelberg

10-year (2001 grads) alumni: Sheila Binder, Heidi Christian, Kelly Hanson, Chris Keiler, Jill Krautkremer, Jill Mason, Kate Nuttle, Erik Viste, and Sara Wiles.

5-year (2006 grads) alumni: Susan Whitney, Ashley Baker, Aaron Geiger, Jennifer Soland, Renee Johnson, Nikki Dorschied, Holly Stangel, Leigh Kraemer, Heather Kruzicki, Rachael Manincor, Mielissa Kossoris, and Danielle White.

Study Abroad Experience in Panama

by Melanie Hill and Kelly Wulff Plumb

During summer of 2010, two UW-L students, Amber Voit and Kelly Wulff Plumb, had the opportunity to study abroad in Panama. This particular study abroad program was organized by UW-Stout and was intended for school psychologists, but also extended opportunities to both school counselors and special education teachers. The program was four weeks long and provided them with many experiences, both educational and non-educational. During the trip, they lived with local families, worked in the schools, took Spanish language classes, took a class about multicultural leadership, and also went on many tourist-like excursions (white water rafting, horseback riding, visited an indigenous village, zip-lining, went to the beach, and took a cruise through the Panama Canal). Through the entire process, they learned a great deal about the school system and special education in Panama.

What does school look like in Panama? The school year in Panama is similar to that in the United States. They get about two and half months off of school and have time off for Christmas and Spring Break. However, they only attend school for about five to six hours a day. They study Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Sciences, English, and Religion (even in the public schools). They receive about five hours a week of English.

What resources do classroom teachers have? Unfortunately there are not a lot of resources for teachers in Panama. The schools do not have much money and so teachers must do with what they have. Students bring their own notebooks and copy class material from the board. There are sets of books for each class that are passed out during that subject. Students do not write directly into these books, but write the answers in their notebooks. There are not very many professional development opportunities available for teachers, and if there are any offered, they are often too expensive for the teachers to attend.

What does special education look like in Panama? Panama just recently went to a full-inclusion model. However, general education teachers have received little to no training on how to differentiate instruction or apply accommodations and modifications. Teachers are trying to figure out how to support these students in the classroom, with the help of the special education teachers. Many teachers did not feel that they had time to devote to students who needed more support. This is difficult because there are no educational assistants in the schools. In some cases, the students’ mother attended school with them, as this is the only way for them to be successful.

What strategies were used in the special education room? The special education room was devoted to students with severe physical disabilities. With most of their students, they use a notebook with pictures to communicate, similar to the idea of a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). Another special education teacher explained a strategy she used to teach a student Braille. She took half an egg carton and some ping pong balls and placed the ping pong balls in the egg carton. She would move around the ping pong balls to resemble the Braille symbol and had the student feel the ping pong balls to learn the Braille letter.

How are students referred to special education? Unfortunately, many students in Panama who are receiving special education or are identified have not been formally evaluated. In Panama, school psychologists do not conduct evaluations, Educational Diagnosticians do this. These diagnosticians are not readily accessible for schools and are very expensive, which many parents cannot afford. Therefore, there are many students who receive services but have never been evaluated.

Overall, Kelly and Amber reported that their time in Panama was invaluable. Both are looking forward to applying what they learned to their current positions. The trip was also an amazing time that provided an opportunity for both individuals to learn about

themselves and to be pushed to do and experience many new things. If anyone is interested in this program and wants to go in the future please contact Dr. Carlos Dejud at dejucd@uwstout.edu.

Program Field Trip: Destination--Monroe, Wisconsin

by Melanie Hill

Recently the current school psychology graduate students, as well as four faculty members, went on an experiential field trip to Monroe, Wisconsin. Why Monroe, you may ask? As some may already know, Monroe is on the forefront of the Response to Intervention (RtI) movement. The Monroe team has been invited to share their success and strategies by speaking at the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association's (WSPA) conference, as well as consulting with individual school districts. According to Joe Monroe, director of pupil services for the school district of Monroe, they began the process of implementing RtI about seven years ago. While in Monroe, the students and faculty listened to a talk on initial implementation of RtI, visited specific schools to watch it in action, had an opportunity to ask questions of the staff and finally, listened to the staff describe their roles in RtI as well as the trials and tribulations during the beginning stages.

After seven years, RtI in Monroe is being implemented consistently at the elementary level. The three-tiered model is now commonplace within the school for all staff members, including teachers (both general and special education), principals, school counselors, school psychologists, and others. While visiting one of the Monroe elementary schools, some of the graduate students had the opportunity to observe a data meeting for one particular student. The meeting included the principal, the school psychologist, the student's current and future general education teacher, the student's special education teacher, and the school counselor. Similar meetings would also usually incorporate the parents' input. It was impressive to observe the terminology that people were using, which has typically been associated with a school psychologist's vocabulary.

While observing this meeting, on-lookers noticed that the meeting room's wall was covered in data. Every student in that elementary school was represented by a piece of paper. The students were divided by grade level and by teacher. The students move back and forth,

depending on the data, from basic to proficient. During these data meetings, teachers have the opportunity to physically move their students on the data wall. Every school in the Monroe district has a "data wall." In another Monroe school, the "data wall" in an electronic format utilizing Smart Board technology with color coding for each level/tier. Monroe school personnel have indicated that the wall has increased accountability within their schools as well as their communication and collaboration. For example, if a teacher recognizes that he or she has more students in the lower achievement categories, he/she seeks out recommendations from colleagues who are demonstrating success. Joe Monroe mentioned that at the beginning of implementation, they had many more students at the left side of the data wall (the side indicating lower achievement) than they do now. Each year, more and more students creep toward the far right side of the wall which indicates academic gains. All of the staff members are excited about this change.

During the last portion of the trip, the school psychologists were able to describe their role throughout the process of implementing RtI. Since the school district of Monroe, started piloting RtI at the elementary level, those school psychologists spoke first. They indicated that seven years ago, their role was primarily for consultation, data collection, and data analysis. Although it was somewhat monotonous to crunch numbers, they recognized the benefit of having this role as a stepping stone to their current role. These elementary school psychologists are now much more involved in direct intervention within their schools. Currently, the secondary level school psychologist is completing the data analysis stage and he is looking forward to the high school successfully using RtI for instructional decisions.



Overall, the day visit to Monroe was helpful to the University's visitors. The students felt a rejuvenated excitement for the possibilities of how school psychologists can make a positive and universal impact in schools. We would like to extend a huge thank you to the Monroe team: Director of Pupil Services Joe Monroe, School Psychologist Chelsea Grinvalsky,

School Psychologist Jeriamy Jackson, School Psychologist Rikki Kazda, School Psychologist Jessica Lervik, School Psychologist Carol Ninmer, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Cory Hirsbrunner, and Principals Lynne Wheeler, Lindsay Dahmen, Amy Timmerman, Todd Paradix and Tina Van Meer. Thank you for sharing some tricks of the trade and reminding us that school psychologists can be catalysts for change.

Ed.S. Theses Oral Defenses Completed

Lindsey Anderson, April 8, 2010, “Effect of Experience and Professional Development on Multicultural Teaching Competence” – Chair: Dr. Joci Newton, Committee: Dr. Tracie Blumentritt and Dr. Betsy Morgan.

The current study focused on the effect of years of teaching experience and professional development hours on multicultural teaching competence in the areas of skills and knowledge. The teachers of three school districts within Minnesota were surveyed for this study. The study assessed levels of multicultural



teaching competence as measured by the 16-item Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS; Spanierman, et al., 2008). The teachers also provided information about their teaching experience, professional development, and demographics. A multivariate multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine if reported teaching experience or professional development hours can predict multicultural teaching competency in the areas of skills or knowledge. This combination of variables (teaching experience and professional development hours) did not significantly predict multicultural teaching skills or knowledge as measured by the MTCS. However, additional analyses indicated that the percentage of professional development hours devoted to multicultural issues did significantly predict multicultural teaching competence. Teachers who engaged in more professional development focused on multicultural issues reported higher levels of multicultural teaching competence. This indicates that school districts should encourage teachers

to attend professional development conferences on multicultural topics in order to assist teachers in developing their multicultural teaching competence.

Alissa Anderson, April 12, 2010, “Teacher Knowledge and Views of the Response to Intervention Initiative” – Chair: Dr. Joci Newton, Committee: Dr. Robert Dixon and Dr. Carol Angell.

Since Congress added new provisions to federal educational laws (IDIEA, 2004; NCLB, 2001), a progressive movement in education called Response to Intervention (RTI) has become more widely known. Embedded in the framework of RTI is the expectation that classroom teachers will become proficient at such things as: using data to inform instruction, monitoring student progress, and adopting



research-based teaching strategies. The purpose of the current study was to conduct a preliminary investigation of how educators would self-report their knowledge, views, and skills related to seven core principles and components of the RTI initiative. Current study findings found that special education teachers and school support staff reported significantly more knowledge and more positive views of RTI than did general education teachers. Primary teachers also reported more knowledge and feeling more supported in their efforts to implement RTI than did secondary teachers. Specific groups of teachers that need to be targeted for future professional development in RTI related areas, along with educational settings that would benefit from professional development and school-wide reorganization were identified, and implications of these findings were discussed.

Jessica Rice, April 19, 2010, “Comparison of CHC Factors in the Woodcock Johnson-III and the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children-II” – Chair: Dr. Robert Dixon, Committee: Dr. Tracie Blumentritt and Dr. Joci Newton.

Assessments such as the Woodcock Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ III COG) and the Kaufman Assessment for Children-II (KABC-II) are

administered by practitioners in order to determine eligibility for special education. The WJ III, COG is based on the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory of cognitive abilities and the KABC-II is grounded in the CHC theory and Luria's neuropsychological theory of processing. This study focused on how the CHC components and the global scores of the WJ III COG



and the KABC –II related to one another and how the global scores on the KABC-II differed from one another. Thirty students identified with specific learning disabilities

(SLD) were administered both tests. Data was analyzed using a paired-sample t test and the CHC factors from the tests were correlated. The results showed no significant differences between the mean of students' global scores and no significant difference between the global scores. The subtests measuring the same CHC factors showed 24 significant correlations. These findings suggest that the scores representing each CHC factor may not be interpreted in isolation for students with SLD. Cognitive processing deficits and variance displayed by students with SLD could impact the interpretation of these factors.

Michelle Hoell, April 23, 2010, "Self-Efficacy Differences in High School Athletes and Non-Athletes and by Gender" – Chair: Dr. Robert Dixon, Committee: Dr. Ryan McKelley and Dr. Katy Kortenkamp.

Educational development is important for the success of society.

Self-efficacy, or the belief that one can complete an activity successfully, has become an important attribute in the drive for successful



students. This concept has broadened to look at the generalized effects of self-efficacy on the development of students. This study examined if generalized self-efficacy ratings differed between high school athletes and non-athletes and/or by gender. Previous research has indicated that participation in high school athletics has multiple benefits for students. In addition, the

relationship between gender and self-efficacy has been the focus of many researchers and typically significant differences are found. This study was designed to expand the research base on generalized self-efficacy and how it varies depending on high school athletic status and gender. Data was collected from 516 students in the 11th and 12th grade utilizing self-report measures. Results showed a significant effect of athletic status on generalized self-efficacy. High school athletes reported a significantly higher generalized self-efficacy rating than non-athletes. There was also a main effect of athletic status shown on subscale of talent on the MJSES of participation in athletics. Together with results of previous research, this study suggests school psychologists may play a crucial role evaluating general self-efficacy, and developing and monitoring interventions designed to increase self-efficacy.

Chelsea (McColley) Grinvalsky, May 13, 2010, "Staff and Student Perceptions of School Climate: The Need for School-Wide Positive Behavior" – Chair: Dr. Joci Newton, Committee: Dr. Robert Dixon and Dr. Casey Tobin.

Positive school climates have been found to promote pro-social behaviors and increase students' academic achievement. School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports provides a framework and set of ideals for educators to create a positive school culture. The current study examined



differences in staff and student perceptions, as well as perceptions in primary versus secondary buildings, related to several factors of school climate (rules and expectations, safety, student relationships, teacher-student relationships). Data was collected through staff and student ratings on the Delaware School Climate Surveys and the results were compared using a MANOVA. A significant interaction was found on the Rules and Expectations and the School Safety Scales. Ideas for teaching students appropriate behavior, using data to make decisions about building practices, and matching the level of support with the needs of the students were discussed.

Sara (Byrne) Ollmann, May 18, 2010, "Motivation: Goal Orientation among Middle School Students" – Chair: Dr. Robert Dixon, Committee: Dr. Ryan McKelley and Dr. Carol Angell.

The present study examined achievement goal orientations among middle school students to examine potential differences in goal orientations between students' developmental level and/or gender. The relationship between students' personal achievement goals and their perception of the classroom goal orientations was also investigated. Three hundred and sixty eight students were sampled across seventh and ninth grade from a junior high located in a Midwest town using a 28-item survey. A MANOVA revealed that boys are more likely to hold performance-approach goals than girls, and perceived their classroom to be more performance-approach or performance-avoidance oriented than girls. Results also found a small positive relationship between students' personal achievement goals and their perceptions of the classroom goal orientations. Finally, the subject type students were given (English, math, social studies, science) was found to impact students' perception of classroom orientations. Math and social studies were perceived as being more mastery oriented than English and science. No other significant effects or interactions found. The obtained results from the study show support for gender differences in students' achievement goals, and the slight influence the classroom can have on students' personal achievement goal orientations.



Lisa (Tlougan) Harford, May 26, 2010, "The Influence of Family Involvement on Kindergarteners' Early Literacy and Social Development" – Chair: Dr. Joci Newton, Committee: Dr. Emily Johnson and Dr. Melanie Cary.

In 1990, the National Education Goals Panel developed eight goals, one of which identified the need for parental participation in a child's education. Both academic achievement and social skills have been identified as positive correlates with family involvement. The present study investigated the impact of family involvement on early literacy and social skills of kindergarten students. Kindergarten is an



important year in a child's academic career, as both literacy and social skills continue to develop, enabling success in school. Family involvement encompassed three dimensions of involvement identified by Fantuzzo, Tighe, and Childs (2000): Home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and home-school conferencing. Results of the study yielded a small to moderate relationship between school-based involvement and social skills development among kindergarteners, suggesting parent involvement within the school environment is important. However, results did not indicate a predictive relationship between any of the three dimensions of family involvement and early literacy or social development.

Kelly Wulff Plumb, May 27, 2010, "Family Involvement of Hmong Parents" – Chair: Dr. Joci Newton, Committee: Dr. Ryan McKelley and Dr. Dung Ngo.

The present study examined the family involvement of parents with children in grades one through five to examine potential differences in family involvement between Caucasian parents and Hmong parents. Potential differences in family involvement as children age were also examined. Two hundred and forty seven parents were sampled from three elementary schools located in a small Midwestern



town using a 42-item survey. A Caucasian mother and father, as well as a Hmong mother, were interviewed to gather qualitative information. A MANCOVA, which controlled for parent level of education and income, revealed no significant results. There was no significant difference in levels of School-based involvement reported by Hmong and Caucasian parents. The parent interviews indicated that both Caucasian and Hmong parents noted barriers to being involved at school (i.e., economic status and having small children at home). Due to limitations of the current study, directions for future research within this area are suggested.

Meg Roethke, June 30, 2010, "Hispanic Parental Perceptions of the IEP Process in the Midwest" – Chair: Dr. Betty DeBoer, Committee: Dr. Tracie Blumentritt and Dr. Melanie Cary.

As the Hispanic population within the United States and its schools continues to grow, schools must gain an

understanding of how Hispanic parents are responding to and comprehending the information brought forth in the initial special education process in order to work towards increasing Hispanic parents' level of understanding and involvement in their child's education. The following study was completed to describe how Hispanic parents understood and were involved in their child's initial evaluation and IEP development. Hispanic parents across Minnesota and Wisconsin whose child had just gone through the special education process for the first time were interviewed within two weeks after their child's evaluation or IEP meeting. School psychologists from 30 school districts across these states helped recruit these Hispanic parents, and 17 of these 30 provided data on their experiences working with Hispanic parents in the Midwest. This data from participating parents and school psychologists was qualitatively analyzed. Parent participants reported high levels of involvement and understanding throughout the special education process while school psychologists reported lower levels of involvement and understanding amongst Hispanic parents in the Midwest. Implications for school psychologists in increasing involvement and understanding amongst Hispanic parents in the Midwest were then discussed.



Nicole (Dorschied) Osgood, July 15, 2010, "Teacher Perceptions of the Importance and Feasibility of School-Based eating Disorder Prevention Activities" – Chair: Dr. Betty DeBoer, Committee: Dr. Casey Tobin and Dr. Carmen Wilson.

This study examined teacher perceptions of the importance and feasibility of eating disorder prevention activities in schools and examined the differences in regards to perceptions amongst teachers across grade levels. Previous research showed that in order for preventative programming to be successfully implemented, it must have the support and understanding of the school staff members. Previous



research has not examined perceptions below the fourth grade. A survey about teacher perceptions of the importance and feasibility of eating disorder prevention activities was completed by 150 Midwestern teachers. Fifty teachers from each grade level completed the survey. Teachers rated twelve of the thirty prevention activities as highly important and six of the thirty as highly feasible. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showed that elementary school teacher ratings of the importance of such activities were significantly lower than ratings by the middle and high school teachers. The ANOVA also demonstrated that high school teacher feasibility ratings were significantly higher than elementary school teachers, but neither high school nor elementary school was significantly different from middle school. This study's results support that eating disorder prevention activities are considered somewhat important and feasible by teachers, but grade level impacts how activities are rated.

Melissa Kossoris, October 25, 2010 – "How Regular Education Teachers' Knowledge About Autism Relates to Their Efficacy when Working with Children with Autism" – Chair: Dr. DeBoer, Committee: Susan Wabaunsee and Dr. Melanie Cary.

This study examined regular education elementary teachers' knowledge about autism, their level of efficacy when working with children with autism, and whether or not their knowledge is related to their personal efficacy when teaching children with autism. Previous research indicated that high efficacy is an important attribute for all teachers to have (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Imants & Tillema, 1995). Little research has been conducted on how a teacher's knowledge about autism is associated with his/her personal efficacy when teaching children with autism. A survey on teachers' knowledge of autism and personal efficacy when teaching children with autism was completed by 23 Midwestern teachers of grades one through five. Overall responses indicated that the teachers felt that they had high personal efficacy when teaching children with autism, but low knowledge about autism. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated and a significant relationship was not found between teachers' knowledge about autism and their personal efficacy when teaching children with autism. A significant relationship between the number of students a



teacher has taught with autism and that teacher's knowledge about autism was found. The current study supports past research that indicates that experience with children with disabilities may be an important factor prior to teaching children with disabilities.

Jenny Stoner, November 22, 2010, "Social Skills Development: The Impact of Sports Participation" – Chair: Dr. Robert Dixon, Committee: Dr. Katy Kortenkamp and Dr. Kristin Mally.

Past research examining the benefits of sports participation has largely focused on middle school, high school, and college age students. The current study expanded the age range by looking at upper elementary school students. Cowart et al. (2004) examined the relationship between social



skills and recreational activity preferences using parent report for K to 8th grade students. The aim of this study is to obtain information from the children's perspective regarding differences in social skills behaviors between gender and types of sport participation. Although there was no difference in type of sport participation, results demonstrate that there was a difference between gender and social skills behaviors. When asked to identify one activity that helped them do better in school, participants perceived that a passive recreational activity involving technology helped them achieve in the classroom. It may be important for educators to integrate technological methods into their classroom instruction in order to promote positive benefits to learning. In addition, student perception of the benefits of technology on their academic achievement can be generalized to social skills development. As School Psychologists, we can use this information to be creative in teaching and practicing social skills with the students through use of technology.

Katie Stinson, December 17, 2010, "Curriculum-Based Measurement in Mathematics: Predicting Future Performance on State Assessments" – Chair: Dr. Robert Dixon, Committee: Dr. David Reineke and Dr. Carol Angell.

Curriculum-Based Measures (CBMs) in reading and their relationship to state standardized tests have been established and an important feature of CBMs. This study will examine the predictive relationship of CBMs (i.e. computation and application) in mathematics on a state standardized assessment for elementary students. This will assist educators in the early identification of problems and the adjusting of their instructional practices in order to promote proficiency on state assessments. The current study used 97 students from one school (35 third graders, 25 fourth graders, and 37 fifth graders). Students were given three probes, two weeks apart. The average scores on the probes tended to increase in all three grade levels for both computation and concepts/applications. A regression analysis indicated that both computation and application probes were significant in predicting WKCE results, indicating that math CBMs can be a valid tool in predicting future performance on WKCEs.



Claire Knoll, March 3, 2011, "Needs Assessment on Discipline Policy Implementation by Staff at the After-School Club Program" – Chair: Dr. Betty DeBoer, Committee: Dr. Ryan McKelley and Dr. Carol Angell.

This study examined if there is a need for change in the training or implementation of the After-School Club (ASC) summer program's discipline policy by staff members, and to assess parent satisfaction with the ASC program. The staff members, program coordinator, students (grades K-5), and parents were participants in this study. Staff members received written materials and verbal training from the program



coordinator prior to the start of the summer session. Measurement of staff self-efficacy beliefs concerning management of children's behavior, implementation of effective management procedures, level of compliance with the behavior policy (i.e., observed on-task/off-task behavior), understanding of the ASC behavior policy, and reported responses to common situations was collected. Measurement of the program coordinator's understanding of the ASC behavior policy and reported staff responses to common situations was also collected. Additionally, measurement of student understanding of the ASC behavior policy, reported staff responses to common situations, and student engagement was collected. Lastly, measurement of parent satisfaction with the ASC program's discipline policy was collected. Results indicated that there is a need for change in the implementation of the discipline policy by staff. This could be achieved through additional staff training and targeted recruiting for staff members. Results also indicated that overall parents are very satisfied with the ASC program; however these findings were limited due to minimal parent response. Overall, this study provides a comprehensive look at discipline policy implementation by staff and makes recommendations to improve current practices.

Ed.S. Case Conceptualizations Completed

Rikki Kazka and Dixie Schubert, October 15, 2010. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Amy Litfin, Lisa Molland, and Alicia Reimann, October 22, 2010. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Lacey Ganser, Lindsey Goree, Andy Kastner, and Katie Menden, December 3, 2010. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Sarah Coolidge, Mike Corrie, Sadie Linnihan, and Ryan Weigel, January 25, 2011. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Stacy Black, Amanda Brown, Danielle White,

and Susan Whitney, January 27, 2011. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Jenna Alford and Megan Fostner, February 8, 2011. Finished the SPY 803 equivalent – Case Conceptualization and qualified for the Ed.S. degree.

Missing Graduates - Can anyone help? -

The following is a list of School Psychology Graduates who are missing, along with their last known area. If you know the whereabouts of any of these people, please send their address (not just a city) or help us find their address. Any help would be greatly appreciated!!

Janice Cordes ('76), Peggy (Fischer) Kolschensky ('82, Eastern U.S.), Richard Spangler ('71, Nekoosa, WI), Wendy Guzzetta ('91 Elko, NV). Kathy Haugan ('84-Bradenton, FL), Dale Lenz ('79, Green Bay, WI), Mary Eck ('78, Maryland), Sean Mulhern ('82, Madison, WI), Dana Anderson-Diehl ('92, Mnpls, MN), Sanford Swiggum ('71, Lake Mills, WI), Jeff H. Snow ('79, Little Rock, AR), Terry Sorenson ('03, Marinette/Green Bay, WI), Tom and Sharon Stuckey('71 & '76, Montfort, WI), Jerry Schutz ('89, Kiel, WI), Joseph Kappler ('73, Caledonia, MN), and Mary Eck ('78, Lutherville-Timonium, MD).

If you know of anyone that has recently retired, please let us know.

Teresa's Tales

We love to hear from alumni. Keep the notes and emails coming and we'll try to include it in this section. Unfortunately this year the newsletter is very late and this section is not complete. I will be continuing this section again next year.

This year was pretty stressful. As some of you know, my husband, Joe, has two brothers whose health was serious...one of whom lives with us and another two houses from us. Both were in hospice and one has since passed away. The other is not doing well and it's just a matter of time.

Information to share? Call 608/785-8441 (day or night) or e-mail Teresa at znidarsi.tere@uwlax.edu. Also, you can catch up with us on Facebook.