



The Collaborative

Spring 2005

Volume XII, Issue II

Ramey Estep High School First State Agency Children's Program in Kentucky to Receive SACS Accreditation

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Ramey Estep High School . 1
- Ramey Estep (cont.) 2
- PD Review 2
- Did You Know? 3
- Tips for Teachers 3
- Tips for Teachers (cont.) ... 4
- Morehead Center 4
- Morehead Center (cont.) ... 5
- Youth Poem 6
- Announcement 6
- District News 7
- Quarterly Quote 7
- Save the Dates 8



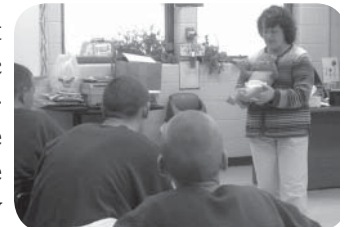
Ramey Estep High School, Boyd County

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACSCASI) has recognized Ramey Estep High School in Boyd County for its educational program. SACSCASI sets the standard for awarding accreditation to schools and colleges in a thirteen Southern state region of the nation. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredits all major universities and colleges in Kentucky and the surrounding regions.

At a recent meeting, Boyd County Superintendent Dr. Bill Capehart explained that his District has been actively encouraging all of its schools to meet the SACSCASI accreditation standards. Of Kentucky's 176 school districts, Boyd County

is one of only 16 to be SACSCASI accredited. Ramey Estep High School is the only educational program for state agency children in Kentucky to be SACS accredited.

Located in Rush, about a half hour's drive from Ashland, Ramey Estep Home is a residential treatment facility for males and females ages 13-17. Currently 174 youths are served in this treatment program. Ramey Estep Home has a comprehensive diagnostic screening facility where skilled clinical staff evaluate and assess newly admitted youth. After a brief stay at this diagnostic residential facility, youth are placed in one of the Ramey Estep residential treatment living units or referred to another placement that better meets their therapeutic and educational needs.



Class prepares student to be responsible parent

Ramey Estep High School is located on the campus of Ramey Estep Homes and provides the educational component for this out-of-home treatment program. This KECSAC supported program is the only high school in this 13 Southern state region which is SACSCASI accredited. Ramey Estep's chief executive officer, Dr. Kathy Cook and the high school principal, Ann Brewster, explained the tremendous amount of work required of their teachers and staffs to meet the SACSCASI accreditation standards.

When one visits the Ramey Estep campus, one is impressed by the dedication of the faculty, staff, and administration to the program and the youth

(continued on page 2)

Professional Development Events

Educating Kentucky's At-Risk Students in Alternative Settings
July 19-21, 2005

Perkins Conference Center
Eastern Kentucky University
CEUs and EILA Credits
Graduate Course
Credit Available

KECSAC's New Educators Training
Sept. 6-8, 2005

Perkins Conference Center
Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, KY



Front left to right: Ann Brewster, Principal; Ronnie Nolan, KECSAC Associate Director; Dr. Norman Powell, KECSAC Director

Back left to right: Linda Trimboli, SACS Committee Chairman; Bill Chaphart, Boyd School Superintendent; Dr. Kathy Cook, Ramey Estep Chief Executive Officer; Lue Cole, KECSAC Program Improvement Specialist

Ramey Estep (continued from page 1)

they serve. There is a multitude of activities, projects, and events occurring simultaneously around the campus. The positive dispositions of the teachers and staff at the high school seem to



Boys build trust during exercise on a log

effectively engage the students in the many academic and learning activities provided at the school. The educational classrooms and facilities are well equipped, well designed and structured. Upon a recent visit, KECSAC staff had an opportunity to observe the students involved in the completion of posters and visual projects for Black History Month. The work and learning activities the students were completing in the science and vocational shop classes were also impressive.



Student creates poster for Black History month

One notable project observed while at the campus involved both youth and staff at Ramey Estep Home. The campus is located in a beautiful area surrounded by mountains and Sugar Maple trees. On one section of the campus is a grove of Sugar Maple trees cared for by

the youth under the supervision of the Ramey-Estep staff. Once a year when the sap begins to run, the youth collect it in plastic gallon containers. After they have collected eighty gallons, they boil off the water and bottle the remaining maple syrup. Then, at a celebration held each year, the Ramey Estep High School teachers and Ramey-Estep staff



Collecting sap to make maple syrup

cook and serve pancakes with the maple syrup for the youth and invited guests. "I think the students like us serving them more than the breakfast itself," said Mrs. Stacey Thompson, a science teacher at Ramey Estep High School

The superintendent of Boyd County Schools, the chief executive officer, the high school principal along with all Ramey Estep High School teachers and staff are to be highly commended for meeting SACSCASI standards of educational accreditation.

Photos by Monica Santa-Teresa

PD Review

The 4th Annual Diversity Conference, co-sponsored by KECSAC, was held on February 9-10, 2005 at the Perkins Center in Richmond. Approximately 170 educators turned out to hear messages of encouragement, discover ways to ensure diversity in our schools, discuss how to rid ourselves of biases towards others, as well as other important issues surrounding diversity.

Nora Stranger, who as a child growing up in the foothills of Appalachia faced the stereotypes surrounding poverty, used storytelling and personal experiences to offer insights into the Appalachian culture and heritage. Attendees received a copy of her book, *Diamonds in the Dew: An Appalachian Experience*. Crystal Kuykendall used stories and humor to illustrate that students learn best when the teacher is positive and encouraging. Sue Thomas, deaf since the age of eighteen months, shared her personal journey and the relationships that made her life possible.

Based on the comments from the participants, this conference was highly successful.

The Collaborative

Volume XII, Issue II

Desktop Publisher

Kaye Parker

Technical Advisor

Dr. Norman W. Powell

Printing

Eastern Kentucky University Press

The Collaborative

is published quarterly and provided at no cost to the readership. For more information contact KECSAC at:

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Tips for Teachers

How does the brain learn? This question is stirring much debate in educational settings. Indeed, it is particularly relevant to alternative education classrooms where a wide array of learning styles must be accommodated. While some educators are exploring the research on brain-based learning and the strategies that are emerging from that research, too little application of that information is being transferred to teaching and learning practices. Although not intended to be a comprehensive list, the following summarized principles based on the brain-based learning research of Jeffery A. Lackney, Ph.D., (Design Share: The International Forum for Innovative Schools) can be paralleled with the standards and indicators in the KECSAC program improvement tool based on Kentucky's *Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*:

Uniqueness – every brain is totally unique.

3.1a Varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms

Impact of threat or high stress can alter and impair learning.

4.1h Teachers care about kids and

inspire their best efforts

4.b Highly structured classrooms with behavior management provide opportunities for high rates of positive reinforcement

Emotions are critical to learning, they drive our attention, health, learning, meaning and memory.

4.c Positive rather than punitive emphasis in behavior management offers rewards for acceptable behavior and compliance

5.a Adult mentors use positive reinforcement.

Information is stored and retrieved through multiple memory pathways.

2.1e Multiple assessments provide feedback on student learning

All learning is mind-body. Movement, foods, attention cycles, drugs and chemicals have powerful effects on learning.

2.a Formal and informal assessments are used to identify causes of behavior, reasons for the behaviors, replacement behaviors, student interview/involvement, and use of multi-component interventions that influence student learning

The brain is a complex and adaptive system.

3.1c Strategies are monitored/aligned to address behavior management needs, individual student intelligences, learning styles, and social skill needs

Patterns and programs drive our understanding.

3.c High-quality diagnostic instruction has value, meaning, and relevance for students

The brain is meaning-driven.

3.a High-quality academic instruction is evident with individual student attention given to learning needs

The brain develops better in concert with other brains – intelligence is valued in the context of the society in which we live.

3.c High quality diagnostic instruction has value, meaning, and relevance for students

Learning is often non-conscious.

8.1d Staff make efficient use of instructional time to maximize student learning

(continued on page 4)

Did You Know



- * The Support Educational Excellence in Kentucky funding formula, or SEEK - which sends state money to local school districts -- has not kept up with inflation since 1990.
- * Spending on P-12 education as a percentage of the General Fund has declined by 6.8 percentage points since 1994. Education spending for primary and secondary education represented 48 percent of the general fund in 1994 and 41.2 percent in 2002.

source: <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE>

Tips for Teachers (continued from page 3)

The brain develops with various stages of readiness.

2.c Youth are assessed formally and/or informally within thirty days of enrollment to determine educational needs

Enrichment – the brain can grow new connections at any age. Complex, challenging experiences with feedback are best. Cognitive skills develop better with music and motor skills.

2.1e Multiple assessments provide feedback on student learning

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with district, school, and state learning goals and assessment expectations

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge needed to motivate students to high levels of learning

5.1d Students are given instruc-

tional support beyond the school day and outside of the classroom

If we look closely at Lackney's principles on brain-based learning, along with the KDE/KECSAC standards/indicators that support those principles, we can draw conclusions about how teaching and learning should be addressed for high student achievement. To that end, we will focus on one of those principles: "the brain is meaning-driven." The following list provides possible strategies individual teachers or groups of teachers could use to give students opportunity to construct meaning relevant to their existing knowledge and experiences:

- Differentiate instruction, especially noting ability levels and learning styles
- Update library books to reflect the interests of the students
- Relate learning to "real life"

- Give students opportunity to reflect on what they are studying, either through writing or oral response
- Develop/use interdisciplinary units so that students see the connections in learning experiences
- Engage emotions through drama, role-play, music, art, dialogue journals, celebrations, etc.
- Provide multiple ways for students to experience the learner actions: access, interpret, produce, disseminate, and evaluate
- Allow choice for students as much as possible

For more information on Lackney's brain-based learning design principles, visit the website www.designshare.com

Morehead Center

Morehead Center, is a residential treatment facility for female juvenile offenders operated by the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children (KBHC) through a contract with the state to provide treatment to the girls. Since students must remain on-site at the facility, educational services are provided by the Rowan County School District.

Morehead Center is fortunate to have Paula Stafford as the only teacher. Paula was born and raised in Elliott County in northeastern Kentucky. After graduating from Centre College with a double major in English and Biology, Paula stayed at Centre as a graduate fellow in Life Sciences. She then returned to college at Morehead State University to obtain teaching certifications (K-4 and 7-12) and a MA in Education and Edu-

cational Administration. Paula earned her Rank I in Educational Administration at the University of Kentucky and is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Kentucky in Educational Administration. Paula is currently in her third year with the Rowan County School district, assigned to KBHC.

Paula plays all the roles-teacher, guidance counselor, records clerk. The school capacity is twelve students in grades 8-12. Twelve students may sound great until one stops to consider the structure of her program. Each student receives a completely individualized program based on her academic needs. So, that means 30 plus courses to plan for each day.

When Paula first came to KBHC, there was no school building. Classes were

held in the living/dining room of the house in which the girls live. Space was inadequate and prevented full implementation of the middle and high school curriculum. KBHC, largely because of a generous donation from Julia Cooper and volunteer labor, was able to construct a separate school building. Classes moved to the facility in January 2004 and now have space and equipment necessary to meet student needs.

Students from across the state are adjudicated to Morehead Center. Paula strongly believes in providing challenging educational opportunities. She assumes her students will transition to regular or post-secondary settings when they leave and wants them prepared to meet those academic challenges. The

(continued on page 5)

Morehead Center (continued from page 4)

treatment and education components at KBHC work together and education is an integral part of each student's treatment plan. The individual plan of instruction is used to plan each student's educational experience. Last spring, Paula's only senior applied to the University of Kentucky. She was accepted into the Honors program and received an Academic Scholarship from UK. She was also one of the KECSAC scholarship recipients. This young woman is pursuing a double major in psychology and Spanish and has finished her first semester with a 3.5 GPA.

One major project Paula implemented at Morehead Center was made possible by a grant from Entre Schools, an organization that promotes entrepreneurship among students. Based on student interests, Paula wrote a grant proposal that was funded for \$2,000. The money was used to create a school based "business" called *Basket Full of Dreams*. Students had total ownership in setting up the business, selecting the products, learning the software to create professionally printed marketing brochures, making the baskets, pricing and distribution. All of these concepts were implemented through an Economics unit. Even though the grant period has ended, they still periodically make hand-woven baskets and have passed



Ms. Stafford with birthday cake made by students

the tradition on to new students. The project required students to develop patience, skill, teamwork, dedication, and perseverance.

A ritual that began when they moved into the new school is Friday cooking lab. Paula believes practical living skills are an integral part of the education for her

students. Each Friday a group of 3-4 students joins Paula in the kitchen to learn new cooking or baking techniques as they prepare a dish for everyone to enjoy. New culinary experiences are important so everyone is required to take at least one bite of what has been prepared. Many students have been surprised at what they liked once they actually tasted it.

Low self-esteem and low self-concept is prevalent in this student population. During the last KECSAC visit, Lue Cole spoke of a program sponsored by Target called "Start Something". The program, a joint venture between Tiger and Earl Woods, is designed to help students realize their leadership potential, set goals, and ultimately carry out a service-learning project. Students began the unit mid-January and are starting to believe in their leadership potential. One of the first tasks was to develop a motto. The students selected: GIRLS AT KBHC (Great Inspiration Requires Learning Skills. After Time, Knowledge Benefits Honest Choices.) Paula is inspired by the growth and choices the girls are making in their lives and feels confident they are acquiring skills necessary for success.

A positive working relationship between KBHC, Rowan County Central Office, and Morehead Center is an important part of the successful program. Late last spring Superintendent Kay Freeland shared information about on line learning. After investigating the program offered by Ed Option's Novel Stars program, Paula decided to purchase "seats" in the on-line curriculum. However, KBHC lacked both the computers and high-speed internet access required to run the program. Mrs. Freeland provided three new

computers, and Betty Stewart, Central Office, set about to get cable to the facility, which Adelphia provided at no cost. Currently, five students are completing one or more course on-line. Because of the credit recovery option, a student who turned 18 in December was able to complete the courses she needed to earn her high school diploma from Rowan County Senior High School before she aged out of state's custody.

Paula takes advantage of every available resource. The students were fortunate



Ms. Stafford and student weave basket.

to have author and poet George Ella Lyons and photographer Ann Olson visit the class. Ann discussed the photography aspects of the work on which she and George Ella have collaborated. Students were thrilled when Ann

allowed them hands on experience with her camera. George Ella led a writing exercise and invited students to share their work. One student, who had never volunteered to read anything she had written, was the first to raise her hand. Afterward, the students presented George Ella and Ann with baskets made especially for them.

If you're in the neighborhood drop by for a visit. You'll see students engaged in numerous activities-all taking place at the same time! They are the epitome of a one-room school. Paula states, "I feel blessed to have the opportunity to work with the students at KBHC. It has been the most rewarding experience in my educational career. Everyday is a challenge, but I have the opportunity to really know my students and witness their growth both as students and as individuals. My life is fuller and richer for having known each one of them".

Child's Poem

Things Change

Sometimes things change for the better
 And sometimes for the worst
 But this is my life
 I choose how it works
 I look into the eyes of my brother
 And see the drama sent from the mother
 From the hard times and the harder ones
 I held my head high trying to survive
 From the hunger to the envy
 We stayed tight
 Keeping from the enemies
 Trying to do what was best
 The bad things stayed close to my chest
 Things caught up
 Worst came to worst
 I lost my brother, my mother
 Man this hurts
 My head came down
 I chose the wrong
 From my friends, choices, things I did
 Now everything is gone
 This makes me realize I got to change
 Drugs, people, wrong choices
 Not worth a thing
 I make this clear one last time
 My life will never be the same
 Because I love my life

a youth in treatment

More District News Warren Juvenile Detention

Residents at Warren Regional Juvenile Detention Center are fortunate to have community volunteers committed to enhancing Arts and Humanities in their program. Recently residents presented their version of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. Volunteer Chad Delpont of Prime Time Events directed the play and Rheanna Plemons of Grayson County High School conducted the music. However, the sense of teamwork between residents and the audience is what gave this production a feeling of hope and promise. Every time someone on stage said, "There she blows!" the audience produced a storm of bubbles that served as encouragement for the actors. The audience involvement helped the actors overcome stage fright and enabled them to present an awesome rendition of *Moby Dick*. Nothing could dampen the success of the evening, not even a dance number that fizzled when two dancers left the program. Members of the staff were ready to fill in to make the evening a memorable night.

The students really appreciate the audience who came to see the play, and especially the Citizen's Committee Members.



Educating Kentucky's At-Risk Kids in Alternative Settings Conference

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 Eastern Kentucky University
 Richmond, KY

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For more information please visit www.kecsac.eku.edu and follow the links under Professional Development Events.

What's Up with District News

Jefferson County Brooklawn School

Brooklawn School is proud of their active Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP). STLP is a Kentucky Department of Education project-based learning program designed to encourage students to use technology and develop leadership skills through its use. Students at Brooklawn learn to use and troubleshoot digital cameras, computers, and printers as well as design and maintain web pages.



Two Brooklawn students, Andrew E. and Tim J., submitted projects for the "Showcase of Schools" held at the Kentucky International Convention Center in October 2004. Andrew and Tim created digital art using various methods. Students also created a Power Point presentation on the "Life of a Student at Brooklawn" - from waking up on their unit to lights out. This was the first year that Brooklawn students have participated in this event. Brooklawn STLP coordinator Michelle Thomason is very proud of all the STLP students. Student winners will be announced at the Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference in March.

Pulaski County Pulaski Day Treatment

Pulaski County School System provided funding for their Day Treatment Program to purchase a piano keyboard in an effort to incorporate more Arts and Humanities core content into instruction and to increase student exposure to a variety of music. The Pulaski County Day Treatment Program is fortunate to have musicians on staff in teacher Randy Frye who is a talented "picker" and bluegrass performer and secretary Paula Bumgardner who plays piano and sings. The debut of the new keyboard and music program began with a holiday program facilitated by Mr. Frye, Mrs. Bumgardner, and invited musical guests Mr. Winfred Frye, and Kyle Perkins.



Music celebration at Pulaski Day Treatment

Pulaski County Kentucky Baptist Home

Pulaski County School System has secured funding that allows the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children to participate in the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. Through the RIF program, KBHC students are able to select free books each quarter through out the year to keep as their own. The program goal is to encourage reading as a pleasurable hobby and to



William White shares his Alaskan experience

increase the availability of high interest reading materials for students. Before the last book selection day, Pulaski County Board member William White visited KBHC to read an excerpt from a book about the Iditarod and to discuss his travels to Alaska with the students. Students have responded with great excitement to the program even making requests for favorite authors to be included in the selections.

" Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela



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