## Partnership Sites

| Cherokee County School District  | Alma Elementary          |
|                                 | Gaffney Middle           |
| Chester County School District  | Chester Park COLT        |
|                                 | Chester Park School of Inquiry |
|                                 | Great Falls Elementary   |
|                                 | Great Falls Middle/High  |
|                                 | Lewisville Elementary    |
| Fairfield County School District| Kelly Miller Elementary  |
|                                 | McCroye Liston Elementary|
| Lancaster County School District| Buford Middle            |
|                                 | Clinton Elementary       |
|                                 | Indian Land High         |
|                                 | Indian Land Middle       |
|                                 | South Middle             |
| York School District One        | Cotton Belt Elementary   |
|                                 | Harold C. Johnson Elementary |
|                                 | Hunter Street Elementary |
|                                 | Jefferson Elementary     |
|                                 | York Middle              |
| Clover School District          |                            |
| Rock Hill School District       | Dutchman Creek Middle    |
|                                 | Ebenezer Avenue Elementary|
|                                 | Finley Road Elementary   |
|                                 | India Hook Elementary    |
|                                 | South Pointe High        |
|                                 | Sullivan Middle          |
|                                 | Sunset Park Center for Accelerated Studies |
| Fort Mill School District       | Gold Hill Elementary     |
|                                 | Riverview Elementary     |
|                                 | Springfield Middle       |
|                                 | Sugar Creek Elementary   |
| Union County School District    | Buffalo Elementary       |
|                                 | Foster Park Elementary   |
|                                 | Jonesville Elementary/Middle |
|                                 | Monarch Elementary       |

## Partnership Goals

- Improve student academic achievement
- Improve professional learning for school-university faculty and student candidates
- Strengthen the pre-baccalaureate preparation of teacher candidates
- Increase support for new teachers

## Table of Contents

2    Note from the Director
2    News Brief
3    Partnership Updates
4    Partnership Projects
6    Curriculum Connections
7    Professional Development
8    Calendar of Events

The NetSCOPE project is funded by the US DOE Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Award CFDA 84.336S.
A Note from the Director

In this issue of the Partnership newsletter, you will find a wealth of information on mentoring. I am humbled at the work already happening with our new Clinical Coaches. These six teachers were nominated by their peers for their skill and disposition as superb mentors. In this new model, the Clinical Coaches will support other mentor teachers throughout the Partnership – they are available to answer questions, listen to challenges, provide strategies, and more. If you visit the website at www.winthrop.edu/netscope/clinical_coaches.htm, you will find contact information for the Clinical Coach in your region. I’ve been told they are working on mentor strategy videos as well as a “FAQ” page, so check back often to see the amazing work these coaches are doing!

Additionally, we have compiled thoughts from mentor teachers on why they mentor – how it promotes their own professional development as well as supports student learning. Although teachers engage in mentoring for different reasons, most grow to understand the tremendous impact it has on making themselves a better teacher. Read the article, consider the thoughts presented, then ask yourself if you might want to join in or if you know of a teacher who has a gift to be shared. As a recent Winthrop teacher education graduate so eloquently described, “Mentors have an innate ability to understand our unique capabilities; they provide critical assistance when needed, but know exactly the time to let us soar on our own.”

Dr. Lisa Johnson
NetSCOPE Project Director

Awards and Recognitions

Fort Mill School District
Teacher of the Year
Lipi Pratt
Sugar Creek Elementary School

Lipi Pratt, fourth grade teacher at Sugar Creek Elementary School, was selected as Fort Mill School District Teacher of the Year for 2013. Pratt has been teaching for 20 years and has worked with gifted and talented students in various elementary schools in Fort Mill since 2001. Seeing herself not only as a teacher but as an advocate for her students, she strives to provide extra strategies that will keep them engaged in the classroom, additional support so that other teachers can better understand the gifted and talented student and his or her needs, and encouragement to continue on the path to success. According to Pratt, “Everyone else calls them a nerd. I tell them to own it.”

2013 PAEMST South Carolina
Presidential Award Finalist
Gail Vawter
Springfield Middle School

Gail Vawter, seventh grade science teacher at Springfield Middle School and Winthrop University-School Partnership Network School Liaison, was selected as one of only five Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) State Finalists from South Carolina. This award is the nation’s highest honor for mathematics and science teachers and is bestowed upon those who “serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education.” As a finalist, Vawter was recognized by the State Board of Education this fall and will also be recognized at the South Carolina Science Council (SC)2 Conference this spring. The 2013 National Presidential Awardee from South Carolina will be announced late spring or summer of 2014, and the award recipient will travel to Washington D.C. to visit the White House and meet the President.

Congratulations, Lipi Pratt and Gail Vawter!
I have called Rock Hill my home my entire life. Because of the love and care I received as a student in Mrs. Beaty’s second grade class at Richmond Drive, I knew I was called to be a teacher. I believe learning never ends and building relationships is the key to success with students and parents. It is my goal to create a love for learning in my students whether they are 10 or 22. I receive much more than I give serving as a teacher, mentor, and leader. Teaching is my passion; watching others learn is my blessing.

I graduated from Winthrop University in 2006 with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, and in 2008, I earned a master’s degree in education in divergent learning from Columbia College. I have had several Winthrop interns in my classroom throughout the past few years and I have always had a wonderful experience. I have grown as an educator, and I feel that being a mentor teacher benefits both the mentor and the intern. I am looking forward to working with other mentors and Winthrop faculty as a Clinical Coach over the next two years!

I have taught third grade in the Fort Mill School District for seven years. I received my B.S. in elementary education from Winthrop University in 2007 and my M.S. in education with a specialization in elementary reading and mathematics at Walden University in 2009. Mentoring is a true honor that provides the opportunity to be a great influence in the lives of beginning teachers, teacher candidates, and students. It is often said that a mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you. I am delighted to serve as a Clinical Coach and am ready to help in any way necessary.

I am currently teaching third grade at Jefferson Elementary School. I have had several different teaching assignments while at Jefferson. I have co-taught as a classroom teacher with an inclusion teacher, team taught, implemented single gender education, and changed grade levels. I have been a mentor teacher to pre-service teachers and beginning teachers. I earned my national board certification in 2008. My passion is to be a resource to all teachers and encourage them to do the best for our students. I am looking forward to serving in the NetSCOPE partnership as a Clinical Coach.

I didn’t begin teaching the eighth grade until I was 40 years old, so I brought adult experience as a mother and former corporate employee to the classroom. This was helpful in many ways, but I was still surprised by the demands of classroom teaching. Now, after fifteen years in the classroom, I look back at the wake of students and interns who have floated through my classroom and feel grateful for the chance to mentor. Interns, as well as first-year teachers, need guidance, and a wise and experienced mentor can forge a relationship that will enrich all the lives she touches.
**What Lays Eggs?**  
By Julia Lipson  
Gold Hill Elementary School, Kindergarten

**Zebra Zebra What Are You?**  
By Kaydence Peeler  
Alma Elementary School, 5th Grade

**Outside My Window**  
By Courtney Vause  
Alma Elementary School, 5th Grade

I open my window and look outside.  
A bluebird is chirping somewhere nearby.  
The sun is shining. It’s a beautiful day.  
The deer come out of the forest to play.  
The flowers are swaying in the soft breeze.  
The squirrels are chittering in the trees.  
The rabbits are hopping on the ground.  
The butterflies are fluttering all around.  
Outside my window the day is bright.  
In the blue sky, no clouds in sight.  
The plants are growing, big and tall.  
Spring is my favorite season of all.

**Rain**  
By Chloe Humphries  
Alma Elementary School, 2nd Grade

I saw a zebra eating grass in the zoo.  
Zebras are mammals just like me and you.  
Zebras drink water and milk.  
Zebras have pattern stripes.  
Zebras make a silly sound and it sounds like a dog.
How Would I Spend a Thousand Dollars in One Day
By Raven Alexander
Chester Park School of Inquiry, 3rd Grade

How I Would Spend a Thousand Dollars in One Day

Have you ever wondered what you would do if you had a thousand dollars and one day to spend it?

If I had a thousand dollars, I would go visit my uncle in New York. I would get him to take me to the biggest mall there to shop. I would buy lots of clothes and shoes. Then I would go get me a big slice of pizza from one of the famous pizza places. I would go to the spa and get nails done and have a massage. I would end my day by having dinner at a fancy restaurant and going to watch a play on Broadway.

I would come back home and show my family the stuff I bought and tell them what I did. That is what I would do.

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Benefits of Serving as a Mentor Teacher

When asked about the benefits of being a mentor, teachers of the Winthrop University-School Partnership Network recognize the need of teacher candidates to gain real-world experience in the profession prior to entering the field and to receive the support and feedback needed to succeed. However, the list of benefits multiplies when considering the impact on mentors and their students. According to current mentor teachers, having a teacher candidate in their classroom makes them more aware of their own practice and encourages self-reflection. As one educator describes, “By the student teacher questioning and asking about my thoughts, my ideas and the reasons behind the different programs and projects we are following, it helps to justify the pedagogy behind a lesson or explain the basis for teaching. This helps teachers to automatically reflect more on what is going on in the classroom.” Furthermore, teacher candidates can keep teachers up-to-date on best practice as they bring what they have learned in Winthrop methods courses into the classroom and inspire teachers to consider new ideas. According to mentors, not only do they gain innovative new strategies to implement in the classroom, but they also benefit from the knowledge their interns have with new technologies. In this way, the two become co-learners.

Mentors can profit from this collaboration in other ways as well. Having two sets of eyes and hands in the classroom can prove valuable. While some report on the benefit of administrative aid with grading, attendance, lesson plans, bulletin boards, organizing the classroom, and even keeping the tone or routine of the class consistent when a substitute teacher is required, others describe the deeper collaboration the experience provides. While the teacher is busy in front of the classroom, this extra set of eyes can observe the students and provide insight on issues in the classroom. Moreover, the teacher now has a partner with whom they can co-plan, co-teach, and discuss outcomes for further advancement in the classroom. As one mentor put it, “two minds are better than one.”

In all of the above-mentioned ways, having a novice as a colleague provides the mentor with a newfound excitement and motivation for further professional development. Desiring to serve as a good model through strong performance and continuous growth via ongoing training, a teacher who welcomes an intern into the classroom improves his or her own practice while also developing leadership, coaching, and management skills, providing the groundwork for further advancing their career. Furthermore, the mentor is presented with the opportunity to not only benefit their own career, but to give back to the entire profession. As current mentor teachers report, they found this experience as a way to honor their mentors and “pay it forward” by becoming an advocate for the profession and encouraging future educators. And many found it very rewarding simply to see their mentee succeed—more so than any renewal credit or monetary compensation mentors receive.

Finally, and most importantly, mentors have found that hosting a teacher candidate has proven beneficial to their students. Cooperating teachers described that having a greater student-to-teacher ratio in the classroom provides more opportunity for differentiation, small groups, and station teaching. Moreover, the additional support reinforces content standards by providing a different voice, presentation, and assessment. And some mentors even found that inviting a Winthrop candidate into the classroom provided a valuable learning opportunity for their own students by exposing them to and educating them about college and the student teaching experience. **Considering the many benefits of serving as a mentor teacher, visit [www.winthrop.edu/netscope/mentor_process.htm](http://www.winthrop.edu/netscope/mentor_process.htm) for more information and start the application process today!**

“Mentoring) challenges me to really think through the ‘whys’ of my teaching practice. Understanding these ‘whys’ allows me to explain my thinking process to someone who is in the early stages of their teaching career and use the information collected from this self-reflection to strengthen my own teaching.”

“Interns can bring a fresh perspective to an existing classroom situation. Through collaboration, the classroom teacher can be enriched and enlightened as well as the interns. I’ve often viewed the interns and myself as learning partners. We both come away from the experience with new knowledge and perspectives.”
On Tuesday, June 11, 2013, the Winthrop University-School Partnership Network hosted its Fourth Annual Partnership Conference for Educational Renewal with the theme “Weaving a Common Thread: Success in Common Core and Beyond.” Since providing a variety of sessions to meet the ever-growing needs of today’s youth, we have asked conference participants what they gained from the experience. Many reported that they have already integrated new technology that they picked up in the concurrent sessions offered. Using material provided by Finley Road Elementary School’s Carrie Gaffney in her session “Integrating iPads in the Elementary Classroom” and Sugar Creek Elementary School’s Ashlee Threatt in her session “Improving Student Behavior Through the Use of the ClassDojo Online Behavior Management Tool,” Stephanie Barber, school liaison at Great Falls Elementary School, tells how teachers have begun using more technology like iPad apps, ClassDojo, and Edmodo at her school. Also learning from their fellow partnership peers, York Middle School’s Teresa LaValle and Alma Elementary School’s Roxanne Wilkins (among others) have found the provided iPad and website resources useful in their classrooms.

In addition to technology tips, many conference participants have readily adapted skills gained from co-teaching sessions like “Co-Teaching that Works” led by India Hook Elementary School’s Carman Austin and Megan Benson. According to Clinton Elementary School’s Rosemary Young and Alma Elementary School’s Whitney Brazitis, they have spent the fall practicing co-teaching strategies with their Winthrop University interns. Other folks have also picked up ways to involve their interns in the classroom, with Winthrop Faculty in Residence at Hunter Street Elementary School, Linda Pickett, describing how the professional development school has “expanded on the strategies we use to involve year-long interns in school-wide activities. We are also developing ways to involve junior methods students.” Additionally, university and school faculty have made gains with new strategies like math and reader response journaling, Project Based Learning, and Daily 5, as well as ideas for engaging and motivating students and inspiring higher level thinking in the classroom.

While many have already implemented some new methods and tools in their schools and classrooms, others have exciting plans to put into practice the knowledge gained from their colleagues. While South Middle School’s liaison, Liz Baker, plans to “familiarize the faculty of the New Education Core for Teacher Preparation” to ensure a successful collaboration between mentors and interns in the future, Clinton Elementary School’s liaison, Shrinetha Stinson, reports that her “colleagues have discussed implementing Reading A to Z in several classrooms.” Others, like Vickie Burkins at Dutchman Creek Middle School, Joanna Setzler at Harold C. Johnson Elementary School, and Jan Carter at Jonesville Elementary/Middle School, have high hopes for integrating new technology in their classrooms. And, appreciating information provided by fellow educators at Riverview Elementary School, educators like Fort Mill Elementary School’s Dorothy Myers look forward to implementing techniques on engaging students at their school.

Always glad to hear the results of collaboration in action, we look forward to continuing to benefit from this partnership at next year’s Partnership Conference for Educational Renewal!
Calendar of Events

January
Jan. 1: New Year, WU Offices Closed
Jan. 3: Partner School Applications Open
Jan. 20: MLK, Jr. Day, WU Offices Closed
Jan. 23: Partnership Advisory Council Meeting
Jan. 28-30: Foundations in Mentoring Training
Jan. 31: Network Management Team Meeting

February
Feb. 3: Partner School Applications Close
Feb. 27: Partnership Advisory Council Meeting

March
Mar. 6-7: Coaching and Observation Training
Mar. 14: Network Management Team Meeting
Mar. 21: Spring Break, WU Offices Closed

April
Apr. 1-2: Analysis of Student Work Training
Apr. 3: Partnership Advisory Council Meeting
Apr. 11: Network Management Team Meeting
Apr. 28: Last Day of Classes, WU Spring 2014

May
May 1: Mentor Teacher Symposium Dinner
May 15: Partnership Advisory Council Meeting
May 23: Network Management Team Meeting

For location & participant information, visit:
www.winthrop.edu/netscope/Upcoming_dates.htm

Professional Learning Opportunities

Winthrop University’s NetSCOPE grant established the Partnership Network to promote collaborative professional learning hosted by university and school faculty. The learning opportunities are open to all educators in the nine partner districts as well as university faculty and staff. Schools do not have to be a Professional Development School or Partner School to participate.

Please visit the PLO website, www.winthrop.edu/netscope/professional_learning.htm, to view professional development offerings, explore possible opportunities schools might consider hosting, and find directions for submitting requests for specific professional learning topics.

"Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."
~Henry David Thoreau