

Spotlight on Powerful Learning

Kid's Kamp 2001 THE Place To Be!

From tadpoles to frogs, raw potatoes to mashed, and thunderstorms to tornadoes, "Evidence of Change" was the theme of the Powerful Learning Lab held at Hector P. Garcia Elementary School in Temple, Texas. One hundred sixty-eight students were immersed with the ideas of change last summer during "Kid's Kamp 2001"

Thirteen teachers, who participated in the Southwest Center for Accelerated Schools Powerful Learning Lab during July 2000, served as host teachers for the two-week camp. Martha Stone, district coordinator of Accelerated Schools, explained the process of developing their Powerful Learning Lab, titled Kids Kamp 2001. "The host teachers, from the three accelerated campuses in Temple, spent two days planning and working with the broad-based theme of change. Teachers brainstormed a list of generalizations, then combined and refined the list into eight generalizations about change that would guide their work for the next two weeks. For the first week of camp, the host teachers focused on three learning outcomes...build a community of learners, set the learning climate, and lay the foundation by focusing students on the generalization of *change over time*."

"During the second week of camp," continued Ms. Stone, "twenty-five teachers from other accelerated campuses came to the school to learn, experience, teach, and apply the dynamic concepts of powerful learning. Before arriving at Kid's Kamp, the new team teachers received a packet of information that outlined their team and grade level assignment, the list of generalizations from the host teachers, and instructions to narrow the focus of "change" during the second week. Host teachers and new team teachers met briefly on Sunday afternoon, outlined what occurred during week 1, shared student interests, and then planned for week 2 with their grade level teams." *(continued on page 4)*

Regional Accelerated
Schools Conference:
November 15-16
in Austin

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Highlights and Happenings

Interested in attending the Powerful Learning Lab this summer? The dates for the lab are June 17 – 21, 2002. For additional information contact Martha Stone at 254.791.6457 mstone@temple.isd.tenet.edu.

Is your school looking for additional funding to continue with ASP or implement an action plan? We are offering two workshops for Grant Seekers this spring. April 23 in Austin and April 30 in Edinburg are designed *continued on page 3*





**Bonnie's Book Club
Recommendation:**

Michael Fullan's
***Leading in a Culture of
Change***
Jossey Bass, Publisher
800-956-7739



From the Director...

Greetings to all of you in our Southwest Center network. It has been a busy year so far and shows no signs of slowing down.

The National Conference was a huge success thanks in large part to all of you who volunteered your time and talent. We had 1009 registered participants from 32 states. More than half of those attending were from our own network schools, which says a lot about your spirit and commitment to this project.

Memories of the conference include the wonderful student groups that entertained and energized the whole audience, the incredible decorations provided by our coaches and schools, Toody Byrd with her marvelous tales, excellent breakout presentations by our teachers and administrators, and door prizes, door prizes, door prizes, all donated by schools and satellite centers. Truthfully it was so much fun I'd like to do it all over again.

That leads me to announce that our 4th Southwest Center Conference will be held on November 15-16 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. While not as large as the national conference it will be every bit as exciting and educational. Enclosed with this newsletter is the Call for Presentations so you can begin thinking about what you would like to present during the conference. The theme of this year's conference is *To Dream the Impossible Dream*.

Soon we will be making our annual site reflection visit to your school. We are eagerly looking forward to seeing the wonderful things that have been happening in your school this year. These visits always are uplifting to us as we see the positive effects this project is having on the children in your school.

Bonnie Hamill, Director

Call for Presentation Proposals

It's that time again! The Southwest Center Accelerated Schools Regional Conference will be held in Austin on November 15 – 16, 2003 at the Double Tree Hotel. (Hotel information on page 3.)

Educators interested in presenting must submit their proposals by September 1, 2002.

Presentation proposal forms may be downloaded from our website at...
www.swacceleratedschools.net



Highlights and Happenings continued

for schools in their third year or beyond with the SW Center.

Check out our website at...

www.swacceleratedschools.net.

Deborah Perez, our administrative associate, has done a fabulous job of updating our website information!

We have received many requests this year for principals to be included in our monthly meetings...

so next school year, we will have joint meetings for coaches and principals on some dates. (Look below in the Coaches' Corner for those specific months.)

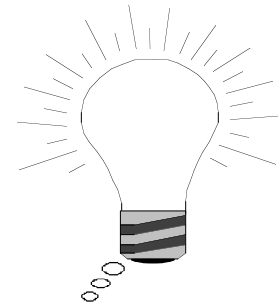
More opportunities to network...

Principals, Internal Facilitators, Cadre Leaders, and External Coaches will be able to collaborate at our **Regional Networking Meetings in October**. (Look in the Coaches' Corner for dates and locations)

To reserve your rooms for our Regional Conference on November 15-16...Contact the Double Tree Hotel at 1-800-222-TREE or 512-454-3737 for reservations. Let them know this is for the Accelerated Schools Conference and request the state rate.

More Conference News... Tom Jackson, author of Activities that Teach, will be one of our keynote speakers and pre-conference presenters. His fun, interactive presentation details the theory behind active learning and why it works with students. The audience will be active participants during his presentation. Discover teaching strategies which help students retain up to 90% of what they learn and see research that shows active learning can increase learning by up to 68%.

We call it Powerful Learning.



Please send us ideas, digital photos, tips, and/or suggestions, on **promoting powerful learning** to include in our Fall 2002 newsletter.

Coaches' Corner

Is your school experiencing a change in leadership for next fall? A new principal or internal facilitator who has not completed the five-day Accelerated Schools training must attend the Leadership Training session on August 5 - 9, 2002. For cadre leaders new to their positions, they should attend a Cadre Leader I session in August or September.

Regional Networking Meetings for principals, internal facilitators, cadre leaders, and coaches:

October 14 – Dallas Area

October 22 – Austin Area

November 21 – Valley Area

National Accelerated Schools Conference
January 25 – 29, 2003 in New Orleans, LA

2002 - 2003 Coaches Meetings scheduled at this time

April 4-5 – new coaches - Setting Priorities

May 24 or June 6-7 – all coaches

August 22-23 – coaches only

September 19-20 – coaches & principals

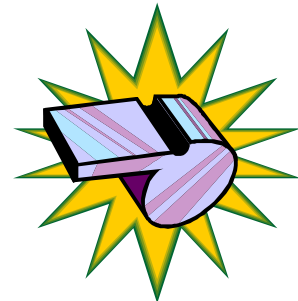
October 10-11 – coaches only

November 15-16 – Regional Conference

December 5-6 – coaches & principals

February 6-7 – coaches & principals

Additional spring dates to be announced



Please duplicate this newsletter for all staff members, community partners, parent groups, and district personnel involved with Accelerated Schools.

For scheduling training dates or checking out videos please contact Deborah Perez at 512.232.0700 or daperez@mail.utexas.edu



Spotlight on Powerful Learning (from page 1)

Imagine a school...

Teachers and students alike were inspired during these two weeks of intense work. Fourth and fifth graders chose to examine change through the decades. Students researched music, culture, politics, and fashion from the 1920's to the present and then presented their findings in creative ways. The outdoor learning center provided the perfect place for students to apply problem-solving skills in a variety of situations. First, they calculated the area of irregular shaped flowerbeds, then they went to a nursery to purchase specific plants for their garden, but they had to stay within a very limited budget, and finally, they observed and recorded the changes in their growing plants.

Earthworms were the highlight for the third grade students. Students hypothesized what would happen to paper, foil, plastic, and food scraps buried in the earthworm habitat. For the next two weeks, they observed, measured, and recorded changes in the earthworms and their environment.

Weather captured the attention of the second grade children at Kid's Kamp. Students charted the various changes in the weather, wrote weather poems, and visited the local TV station to learn how a weather program is created. Students then produced their own weather program on the last day of camp.

"Metamorphosis" was definitely a new word for first grade students as they discovered the stages of tadpole development. Teachers asked the students "What do you know about tadpoles? What do you want to learn about tadpoles?" and then used the student's responses to plan their learning centers. Activities included tadpole puzzles, frog puppets, frog books, but the favorite attraction for students and adults alike, was the pond in the classroom where the children could observe, touch, and feed the amphibians.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students also worked with the concept of change. They made ice cream by combining their ingredients, filling their containers with salt and ice, and then rolling their containers down the hall to create the physical change. They also made butter by hand and shucked corn. Even an apple peeler was an interesting tool, as students peeled apples and then placed the slices in the food dehydrator to observe the changes that occurred.

"Our goal here is to constantly provide learning instruction for the students," said Ms. Stone. "We want to help them realize that once they are given the tools for higher-level thinking and reasoning, they can be successful in all they do in their classes."

In addition to teachers and students, parents were a critical component of Kid's Kamp. Parents were welcome to attend the camp anytime during the two weeks, but a special "invitation" was sent out to the entire school community to attend the "finale" on Friday, the last day of camp. A gallery tour and student performances provided an opportunity for visitors to see what the children had learned over the course of two weeks.

Thomas Nichols, a 5th grade team teacher, commented that parents told him, 'Thank you for having this...' 'My child has talked about this for two weeks...' and 'Will you do this again next summer?'"

Lydia Gaines, principal at Garcia Elementary, stated, "We had a tremendous turnout from our parents, grandparents, school board, and administration. Parents have repeatedly called my office, requesting the dates for the next camp. They want to pre-register for summer 2002 and arrange their other summer activities around this learning experience."

It was obvious during the site visits that the children were excited and enthusiastic to be at school - even during summer vacation. Teacher reflection journals indicated that the powerful learning lab was an overwhelmingly positive experience that will impact how they teach in their classrooms next year. And the Temple Accelerated Schools have received a \$3.5 million grant to continue and expand the Powerful Learning Lab to include after school programs for the next three years. There is no doubt that Kid's Kamp 2001 - Adventures in Powerful Learning was THE place to be!

Editor's Note: Kids Kamp 2002 will be held June 10 – 21, 2002 at Hector P. Garcia Elementary in Temple, Texas. This year's broad-based theme will be structures. For additional information, contact Martha Stone at 254-791-6457 or mstone@temple.isd.tenet.edu



2nd grade students working on their original Weather Report