

## **Morning Session**

### ***Welcoming Remarks***

**Margaret Kirwin**, Dean of the Lally School of Education at the College of Saint Rose, welcomed participants and described the dedicated teacher for whom the Lally School was named.

**Lawrence Hirsch**, Director of the New York Comprehensive Center, welcomed participants on behalf of the Center, and explained that this symposium was the first in a series of events of the IHE/Teacher Quality initiative under which the symposium was sponsored. The primary objectives of the IHE/TQ initiative are the following:

- Assist IHE faculty who educate teachers to stay knowledgeable about Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) and to better incorporate SBRR into teacher preparation courses.
- Catalyze a network among IHE faculty who collaborate to share resources and periodically adjust their instruction and materials in accordance with the best available research.
- Enhance communication and collaboration between the New York State Education Department (NYSED), district administrators, and IHE faculty who prepare new teachers.

**Richard P. Mills**, Commissioner of Education for the state of New York, welcomed participants and described how the work of teachers in general, and this group in particular, is critical to enabling schools to work for all children. The academic achievement of students and the ability of our educational system to close the achievement gap are important factors in keeping the state and the country competitive in the global market.

**Susan Villani and Melissa Torres**, IHE/TQ Co-Chairs, outlined the day's agenda and introduced Catherine Snow.

## **Keynote Address: Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading**

**Catherine Snow, Ph.D.**, Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, presented the research that forms the basis of her recent book, *Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*. Dr. Snow outlined the knowledge teachers need to effectively teach reading at all grade levels. She also contrasted data that show high levels of literacy in the early American grades with data that show low levels of literacy in the later American grades, asking participants to consider whether American teachers are not teaching foundational skills sufficiently in the early grades, not teaching literacy adequately in later grades, or whether the current organizational structure of schools poses a problem. Dr. Snow noted that American assessments focus on literacy skills that are easy to test, to the neglect of vocabulary and comprehension skills. Dr. Snow's talk also highlighted various forms of teacher knowledge – declarative, situated, reflective, and expert—and how teachers develop their professional knowledge over time.

Throughout the keynote address, Dr. Snow addressed questions from the audience about how best to incorporate comprehension strategies, how university faculty can better connect students to active knowledge, and on what topics of literacy instruction there is broad consensus. Finally, Dr. Snow presented a model for professional growth based on a learn-enact-assess-reflect cycle. This model can guide any teacher education program or professional development program for in-service teachers.

## **Role-Alike Afternoon Sessions**

Participants broke into two workgroups for the afternoon session, based on their role. IHE faculty worked with Dr. Shari L. Butler, and NY State Education Department personnel and district administrators met with Dr. Catherine Snow.

### ***Challenges and Best Practices of In-service Professional Development***

**Dr. Catherine Snow** led an afternoon discussion in which NYSED and district participants discussed the state's effort to produce high quality teachers and the role that districts play in mentoring new teachers. NYSED and district staff explored a variety of initiatives currently underway in New York. The participants also expressed a strong desire for increased opportunities to communicate with colleagues and to collaborate with IHE faculty in creating a systemic approach to teacher development. District administrators also discussed the quality of new teachers and their readiness to meet the challenges they face in their new teaching positions.

### ***Presentation and Roundtable Discussions***

**Shari L. Butler, Ph.D.**, Fellow in the Margie Gurley Seay Centennial Professorship in Education at the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at the University of Texas, gave a presentation to IHE faculty. Dr. Butler presented reading research and discussed ways to use research findings to inform practices in educational systems. Butler described a network she helped found among Texas teacher education faculty, the Texas Higher Education Collaboration, whose objectives are to:

- Align teacher preparation course curricula with scientifically based reading research.
- Assure that professionals are knowledgeable of the reading and language arts standards and are incorporating these critical components into teacher preparation courses.
- Provide training materials related to the professional preparation of teaching reading.
- Establish a community of faculty in the ongoing process of adjusting their instruction and materials to enhance the preparation of teachers.

Participants worked in small groups to:

- Discuss the literacy research presented.
- Discuss how teacher-education faculty influence teacher preparation.

- Review course syllabi to find gaps or overlap.

Participants concluded their session with Dr. Butler by discussing the possibility of creating an IHE faculty collaborative focused on early literacy across New York State. Benefits that IHE participants said they would like from such a collaboration included:

- Easy access to the reading research by other faculty
- The opportunity to engage in discourse about the state's philosophy of teaching reading
- An opportunity to upgrade the syllabi of literacy courses to align with the New York state standards
- The opportunity to problem-solve with other faculty

### ***Conclusion, Debrief & Next Steps***

**Participants suggested that they could take the following actions as ways to continue the conversations and move forward on the items discussed during the day:**

- IHE faculty meet and work in regional groups
- Report back to own groups within own organizations to share what was done at the symposium
- Structure follow-ups that allow all participants to hear each other's thinking (IHE faculty, SED staff, and district administrators.) IHEs continue the conversation with K-12 schools around in-service professional development.
  - Example from Dr. Butler: The Texas Higher Education Collaborative identified individuals within the IHE collaborative as coaches, and then provided PD to these coaches so that they could then offer PD in the districts, thus building capacity in the districts. Some of the district staff who had been trained by these coaches then went out with the IHE representative to facilitate the PD in the K-12 field.
- Faculty can continue to discuss research and research methods to inform literacy courses
- Have NYCC staff come to various university sites and work with small groups
- Help teachers to communicate with parents about their literacy curriculum and strategies—especially for students with disabilities or who are from other cultures
- Facilitate more dialogue between state education staff and those who work in teacher preparation. Identify issues and develop proposals about how best to meet teacher preparation needs together
- Improve the connection between special education and general education around the topic of literacy curriculum and instructional practices

**NYCC offered to take the following actions to continue the conversations and move forward on the items discussed during the day:**

- Develop and facilitate an online network that will enable faculty to share syllabi and continue the conversations about teacher education begun during this initial symposium

- Support the work of Dr. Butler with specific faculty at their IHEs to continue their work to use SBR in their preparation of teachers
- Sponsor another symposium in the spring of 2007, based on literacy topics and the faculty needs that will be identified during the online dialog to follow in the coming months
- Work regionally with small groups of IHE faculty