

from the
President/CEO



Greetings!

It's hard to believe that school has once again started up for the year in southwest Indiana. How time flies! It's even harder for me to believe that Consultants in Education (CIE), a division of SINE, is beginning its third year working to help area schools.

Under the leadership of Sandy Nixon, CIE consultants work to provide area school and teachers with the highest quality training, both on-site and in workshop settings. The CIE consultants are effective at creating trusting relationships with principals and teachers, which allows them to make the most of their roles as trainers and facilitators, in providing ongoing support to schools.

In addition, the CIE consultants help numerous teachers by modeling strategies in classrooms and coaching teachers to effectively use best practices with their students.

To date consultants with CIE have worked in 110 of 151 (72.8%) total schools in southwest Indiana. They have worked in 89 of 97 (91.8%) schools outside Vanderburgh County. In addition, they have worked in 103 of 115 (89.6%) schools outside the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation as it is the only district with its own cadre of trainers.

CIE consultants have also worked in seven school districts outside southwest Indiana and have conducted workshops for the Southern Indiana Education Center, the West Central Education Center and the East Central Education Center.

With the training they have received from national experts, the CIE consultants are prepared to help schools meet their education goals for students.

Some of the national experts CIE consultants have trained under and worked beside include Cheryl Sigmon, Vicki Spandel, Ruth Culham, Barry Lane, Ralph Fletcher, Dr. Ruby Payne, Dr. Ruth Kaminski, Dr. Roland Good and Carol Anne Tomlinson to name a few.

The consultants expertise is focused in the areas of Six Trait Writing, Four Blocks, Reading in the Content Areas, DIBELS, Writing Across the Curriculum, Poverty in the Classroom, Differentiated Instruction, Teacher Reading Academies and many more.

I wish you all a great 2006-2007 school year and encourage you to contact SINE for more information on how CIE consultants can help you provide the best educational experience for your students.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Cardinal
President/CEO

CIE consultants receiving DIBELS training

Consultants in Education (CIE), a division of SINE, will soon offer a new training program called DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). DIBELS is an assessment piece that complements the strategies from the Teacher Reading Academies that SINE offered this summer and is a natural continuation of SINE's literacy work.

Four CIE consultants recently attended a two-day training of trainers seminar to learn more about DIBELS.

DIBELS are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.

DIBELS are comprised of measures to test fluency in the following areas: Initial Sounds, Letter Naming, Phoneme Segmentation, Nonsense Words, Oral Reading, Retelling, and Word Use.

The measures were developed to assess student development of phonological awareness, alphabetic understanding, accuracy and fluency reading connected text, vocabulary and comprehension. Each measure has been thoroughly researched and demonstrated to be a reliable and valid indicator of early literacy development. When used as recommended, the results can be used to evaluate individual student development toward validated instructional objectives as well as provide feedback on effectiveness of intervention support.

According to the developers of DIBELS, Dynamic Measurement Group, during the 2005-2006 school year, 10,054 schools used the DIBELS Data System (K-3).

The two-day training of trainers that the CIE consultants attended went beyond the basics of how to administer and score the measures. It provided an in-depth understanding of the conceptual and empirical foundations of DIBELS as well as in-depth training in administration and scoring of the measures. **(continued on page 5)**

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Web site loaded with educational games, activities, and lessons for students and teachers



Ball State University, with its nationally recognized Teachers College and being the alma mater to Garfield's creator Jim Davis, has joined forces with Garfield's creative group, Paws, Inc., and dozens of world-renowned experts in education to launch a free web site overflowing with educational games, activities, instruction, drills and demonstrations.

www.professorgarfield.org is the brainchild of Ball State and Paws, with significant support and content contributed by Pearson Digital Learning, Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, Scholarship America, USA Funds, Sallie Mae, Columbia University Teacher's College, and Grammy-award winning children's composer, Red Grammer.

A visit to the site brings you to the door of Professor Garfield's Laboratory, a space-age classroom with portals to interactive educational material focused on mathematics, social studies, art instruction, science and health, and Davis' personal favorite, reading.

"Over my 27-year career of doing GARFIELD, I've heard countless stories from parents and teachers telling me that the strip kick-started a child's interest in reading," says Davis. "The comic strip is simple and fun with a logical sequence and word-picture clues. I began to feel strongly that comic strips were an overlooked, yet readily accessible learning tool. If you can tickle a child's funny bone, you can tickle and stimulate his brain."

Ball State agreed with Davis' assessment. Through its Business Fellows program, backed by a \$1.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., five students worked an entire semester developing the section's content. The students, from the university's Teachers College, developed material for the site's reading section, which uses comic strips and fun interactive challenges to promote reading and reading comprehension.

Through the site, students can hone reading skills while wrestling Dr. Stripp in the "Reading Ring," learn to draw with Jim Davis and his staff artists in the "Art-Bot," climb into the "Knowledge Box" to play math, social studies and language arts games, see how sleeping well means doing well at the National Institutes of Health's "Star Sleeper," and challenge Professor Garfield in a trivia contest in "G-Cubed."

"Garfield and Jim Davis are committed to blending humor with the power of the Internet as an education tool, and the Teachers College has dedicated its resources in content development, research and assessment to create an educational site that's like no other in the world," said JoAnn Gora, President of Ball State University.

Content on the site is based on state standards and includes teacher's lesson plans and incorporates assessment methodologies. The site also includes free printable award items for teachers to use as incentives. Over time, the site will mature into areas of writing, mathematics and other core areas, first at kindergarten through third grade levels and systematically expanding to encompass grades K-12.

About Paws, Inc.:

Cartoonist Jim Davis' company, Paws, Inc., located near Albany, Indiana, was founded in 1981 to handle the creative end of the Garfield licensing business. Today, Paws is the sole owner of all copyrights and trademarks for the Garfield property, and controls not only the creative angle of the fat cat's flourishing empire, but also the licensing, marketing, and brand management of Garfield and the Garfield characters.

In 2004, Paws helped establish the Professor Garfield Foundation, a not-for-profit entity whose mission is to reach students with entertainment and education.

SINE welcomes new board member

SINE is pleased to welcome Dr. Linda Bennett, a new board of directors member representing Vanderburgh County. Dr. Bennett, who is Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Southern Indiana and also a Professor of Political Science, joined SINE's board in July. She replaces Dr. Tom Pickering.



Dr. Bennett said she is excited to bring an enthusiasm for education at all levels and the desire to contribute to SINE's mission.

For the past two years she has served on the Joshua Academy Board, including a stint last year as President of the Board. She is also on the Leadership Evansville Board and the Metropolitan Evansville Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors as well as a member of Mayor Weinzapfel's Education Roundtable and one of its subcommittees.

As Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at USI, Dr. Bennett's duties are tied to the university's academic mission including the deans of the five colleges, the director of the library, director of graduate studies and sponsored research, as well as Extended Services (which includes continuing education and outreach programs) and University Division (tutoring services and advising for all students who have yet to declare a major). "I am fortunate to work with a talented and dedicated group of deans, directors and department chairs," she said.

Dr. Bennett said she believes SINE is an important organization because there is no more important issue in the nation than that of literacy. "Democracy assumes a literate public and without it, democracy withers," she said. "SINE is dedicated to the elemental mission of literacy and to the degree we are successful, we nurture the democratic spirit."

"It is such a pleasure to have the opportunity to work with the other members of SINE's Board, President/CEO Mary Kay Cardinal and Chairman of the Board Jim Edwards," Bennett said. "I've had the pleasure of working with Jim on another project at USI and his knowledge of the region and its people is remarkable!"

" We believe all people of southwest Indiana deserve the opportunity to participate fully in the economic, civic, and cultural life of the region. SINE provides leadership and services that focus on educational networks, literacy for all ages, professional development of educators, workforce advancement, and lifelong learning."

Teachers Love SINE's Learning Exchange Program

It's one thing for a student to read about something in a textbook and another thing to actually experience it. More and more teachers in southwest Indiana want their students to experience the advantages of hands-on learning, which could be why so many of them are applying for SINE (Southwestern Indiana Network for Education) grants. SINE's Learning Exchange Program allows teachers and local business representatives to work as a team on specific projects designed to give junior high and high school students "real world" work experience and guide them in making career decisions. During the 2005-2006 school year, approximately 55 teachers received over \$42,000 in grant money from SINE.



Students from Gretchen Fleming's class work to replace some of the damaged plants at the Warrick County Pet Adoption Center after the November 2005 storm. Their project was to study land reclamation and develop a landscape plan and install plants that would offer food and shelter for wildlife as well as restore the ground.

The Learning Exchange Program is a three step process. First, a business representative visits the classroom and talks about her job. Next, the teacher visits the business partner's work place to discuss the class project. The final step is a field trip where the students visit the workplace and get to experience first hand what a day in the life of an accountant, musician, or T.V. news anchor is really like.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

This is the third year Gretchen Fleming, a science teacher at Boonville Junior High School, has participated in the Learning Exchange Program, and she says her seventh and eighth-grade students were thrilled when she told them they were going to spend a day at the Pet Adoption Center in Newburgh.

Fleming works with "resource students," those in special education, and she says this learning style is especially beneficial to them.

"They haven't typically been successful reading a textbook and then applying what they have learned from a textbook on the test...Instead of taking a test on this, they were able to do a hands-on project," Fleming says.

The class completed a two-part project that involved learning about animal behaviors by working with Dale Barker Wright, executive director of the Pet Adoption Center, and learning about horticulture through completing a landscaping project at the Center.

The timing of the landscaping project couldn't have been better. Just a few days before the field trip, a tornado ripped through Warrick County uprooting trees and damaging shrubs and flowers.

But before the students could dig their green thumbs into the black soil, they had to find out a few things. What kind of flowers will grow in southwest Indiana? What's the difference in a perennial and an annual? What's the best way to prepare the soil when planting a tree?

The students honed their research skills by gleaning information from the encyclopedia, the internet, and other sources.

But working with the dogs was the highlight of the field trip as far as the kids were concerned.

"It was just awesome, because the kids just seemed to melt when they started getting the animals," says Fleming. "They were each assigned an animal, and they were so excited."

Wright taught the students about the proper way to train and care for dogs and other animals.

"They came away with a wealth of information they never would have received out of a book," says Fleming.

Wright says some of the students want to pursue careers in animal care, and are interested in becoming veterinarians, veterinarian technicians or animal behaviorists. She believes the students' experience at the Pet Adoption Center helped them make the connection between all that "boring stuff" about organisms in their biology textbook and the need for that knowledge as they start to think about college and their career paths.

"I think the students have a better appreciation of why they need to study and comprehend subjects that are not as popular, such as math and science," says Wright. "They had a better understanding of why the information they are learning in school will be useful to them in the future."

Fleming says the students not only learned about applied and life science, but gained a tremendous sense of accomplishment.

"I don't think you can even measure the success of this project, because you take it in terms of ...the on-site work and seeing the benefits of what they did with the landscaping. They can pass by there and say 'Oh, I planted that tree.' You see the self-worth and self-esteem," says Fleming.

"As a teacher, I think SINE should receive praise over praise because of the fact they provide kids with opportunities they would never have been able to have."

Gracias North Daviess Junior and Senior High School

Pat Brochin, a Spanish teacher at North Daviess Junior and Senior High School, partnered with Mary Robertson, Ed. D. in Vincennes, Director of Programs, at the Southwest Indiana Regional Youth Village in Vincennes, a facility for at-risk youth. Some of the youth at the facility are Hispanic and speak little or no English. Brochin and Robertson spearheaded a Learning Exchange project designed to emphasize to Brochin's 12th-grade students, who live in a fairly homogenous, rural community, that having an awareness of cultural diversity is valuable, and that speaking Spanish has practical applications in the workplace.

"They are pretty naïve, I feel," Brochin says of her students. "I wanted them to see that there are some cultural differences out there that they are going to have to deal with. Knowledge of another language will help them overcome some cultural differences."

Brochin's class designed a Spanish-language brochure to give Hispanic teens upon their arrival at the facility. Its purpose is to reassure them that they will be well taken care of and to alleviate some of their fears about being in a strange place. The class also helped translate signage, menus, health questionnaires and other written materials into Spanish, and they made flashcards to help the kids learn English.

Many times teens end up in the Youth Village's Shelter Care Program because they have been found unaccompanied at the border of the U.S. and Mexico, or their parents have been detained by immigration officials. They don't understand what's happening because nobody is able to communicate with them.

Brochin credits one of her students, 17-year-old Danielle Deisher, with sparking the idea for the project. Danielle worked at the Youth Village as an interpreter and saw many Hispanic teens, but only a handful of Spanish-speaking youth development specialists.

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Teachers Love SINE's Learning Exchange Program (continued ...)

Danielle says the lack of Spanish-speaking staff at the Youth Village sometimes led to comical situations.

"The youth would play tricks on the workers because they didn't speak Spanish. They (staff) would ask what the word for 'girl' was, and the kids would tell them the wrong word," Danielle says.

Robertson gave Brochin's class a tour of the Youth Village and emphasized that regardless of what career they choose, speaking Spanish can give them an advantage over someone else with a similar education and background.

"It was a real awakening to them that in their various fields of interest, there was a place for Spanish," says Robertson. "I think it made them realize this would look good on a resume and give them an edge in the workplace."

Danielle says she is thankful SINE gave her class the opportunity to learn about another culture and meet a need in the community at the same time.

"I'm extremely grateful to them. We wouldn't be able to do it without the grant. I'm sure the youth and the Youth Village are going to be grateful also," Danielle says.

Brochin says her experience with the Learning Exchange Program has been so rewarding she wants to spread the word to other educators. "I keep talking up the Learning Exchange to other teachers. It's a great way to get away from the text book," says Brochin.

SINE hosts fall workshops

Check out two of the workshops SINE is planning for this fall:

Strategic Reading in the Content Areas, Grades K-12 - October 4 and 5 and November 14

According to author, developer, and trainer Rachel Billmeyer, content-area teachers hold the keys for helping students understand how to think as they read. Teaching students how to read strategically in every subject and grade level helps them know how to think in order to successfully master the content. This three-day workshop will look at current information about the role of "thinking about thinking;" three interactive reading ingredients of context, reader, and text features; and current research on vocabulary and concept development.

The workshop resources will include a K-12 children's bibliography for all content areas and resources for all content areas, special education, and English language learners. And SINE will be providing a copy of Dr. Billmeyer's books Strategic Reading in the Content Areas: Practical Applications for Creating a Thinking Environment and Strategies to Engage the Mind of the Learner for each participant in the workshop.

The training outcomes include the following:

- Develop an increased knowledge base about reading instruction in ALL content areas
- Examine the three interactive reading ingredients and the four traits of a strategic reader
- Analyze the organizational features of narrative and informative text
- Experience strategies for teaching reading

Dashboard Data Initiative – November 16 and 17

A dashboard is a set of performance indicators that reflect the most important results for the classroom, school, and district and which have been developed by the school and its customers and stakeholders. The purpose of the dashboard workshop is to help everyone focus on the most important goals, to provide data on current and desired performance, and to generate discussion about opportunities for improvement.

Data folders house the important stuff! They might be three-ring binders, a series of Excel charts, or electronic lockers in which students, teachers, administrators, and support staff maintain their results for key dashboard performance indicators!

Once you have established your aligned dashboards and are collecting performance results in data folders, you will be ready to conduct your first System-to-System (S2S) Talks. S2S Talks engage teachers with students and principals with teachers for the purpose of reviewing student achievement data.

S2S Talks engage one level of the system with the next level in order to review strategy deployment and leading performance results, usually on a quarterly basis. The ultimate purpose is to review "progress to plan" and to make necessary adjustments as needed.

If you are interested in attending one of these or any other SINE workshop please call 1-866-380-7463 or logon to www.sineonline.com.

Teachers, businesses invited to participate in Learning Exchange

"Why do I need to know this?" and "How will I use geometry in my job?" are the kinds of questions that middle and high school teachers commonly hear from their students. Thanks to the Southwest Indiana Network for Education's (SINE) program called the Learning Exchange, these teachers have found one solid way to answer their students' questions.

The purpose of the Learning Exchange is to foster relationships between businesses, educators and students. The program is designed to demonstrate the applicability of education to the business world/workplace to youth. It is a three-fold process involving a combination of the following components: teacher visitations to the workplace; business visitations to the classroom; and student visitations to the workplace.

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Teachers, businesses invited to participate in Learning Exchange

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"The Learning Exchange program is a great way to demonstrate to students the connection between education and workplace expectations," says SINE President/CEO, Mary K. Cardinal. "Students become better informed about the relevance between classroom experiences and employment success."

The Learning Exchange is coordinated by SINE and involves the participation of teachers and businesses from the nine-county area including Vanderburgh, Gibson, Posey, Warrick, Pike, Daviess, Knox, Perry and Spencer counties. SINE pairs up teachers and businesses for semester-long Learning Exchange projects. Those who participate in the Learning Exchange will be treated to a celebration event near the end of the school year where they will be recognized for their efforts.

If you are interested in participating in this year's Learning Exchange, contact Susanne Wilson at 812-459-6123.

CIE consultants receiving DIBELS training

(continued ...)

"DIBELS is an ongoing assessment of how well children are learning reading skills in grades kindergarten through three," said Sandy Nixon, Coordinator of Consultants in Education and K-12 Professional Development. "The test is developmentally appropriate for young children and provides information for teachers about how their students are progressing in comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, fluency, and other reading and literacy skills. It is a very good match with the other literacy pieces for younger children supported by SINE."

Watch the SINEpost for more information on DIBELS training.

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the toll-free number.

Posey Adult Learning Services receives grant



The Posey Adult Learning Services recently received a grant from the Posey County Community Foundation for GED scholarships. The award of \$1500 was received by Kathrin Hast, Program Coordinator for Posey Adult Learning Services, at the Posey County Community Foundation's Annual Meeting on June 7, 2006 at the New Harmony Bayou Grill Conference Center.

The Posey County Community Foundation, PCCF, is part of a larger alliance, Community Foundation Alliance, that serves nine counties in Southern Indiana. The Alliance's mission is to provide leadership assistance and support for member Community Foundations as they promote philanthropy and build endowment to serve their community.

The Posey County Community Foundation is represented by civic leaders who live and work in the county and are motivated by a true desire to help their neighbors, colleagues and friends connect with the charities they care about in a meaningful and lasting way.

In addition, they are dedicated to making grant making decisions based on their first-hand knowledge of the community's greatest needs as well as awarding scholarships to the most qualified candidates.

Each spring, non-profit organizations in Posey County are invited to send in an application for their respective organizations. The members of the Foundation's grant making committee meet to review and consider funding proposals from a wide range of nonprofit organizations serving the county. Posey Adult Learning Services received a letter in May notifying them of their award. They were then invited to the Annual Meeting where the awards were presented.

Hast said the Posey Adult Learning Services will use the money for GED scholarships. A learner may apply for this scholarship at the Opportunity Center in Mt. Vernon or through the GED program at the Posey County Jail. The learner must be currently enrolled in the GED program, have completed at least 12 hours of instruction, taken the pre-GED test and demonstrated a financial need, she said. The scholarship will pay for a complete battery of five tests or an individual test.

"We feel that everyone will benefit from this scholarship," Hast said. "So many times a learner will go through the classes and then not be able to take the actual GED test because of lack of funds. Sometimes paying for a test could be the difference between paying for food for their family or rent."

According to Hast, once the learner has taken and passed the GED test, he or she is then able to start providing for their families and become productive members of society. "They also become more involved in their family and their community," she said. "We are glad to be a part of this process."



Learning for Life.⁵



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You and SINE

Partners in a Stronger Future



SINE has had a very good beginning ... but this is just the beginning. SINE has made a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals in Southwest Indiana ... not only through direct contact, such as the many training programs, but also through the impact that these trained professionals, successful students, and achieving adult learners will have on the lives of those around them.

Your generous contribution aids SINE in developing and sponsoring the much-needed programs that partner with education and businesses to improve our workforce; assist us in underwriting costs for programs that aid our at-risk and underachieving youth, creating brighter opportunities for their future; help us establish or enhance adult learning opportunities that include literacy services, basic computer training, ESL, GED or high school completion programs; and allow us to increase the contributions that SINE makes to such programs as our classroom libraries. SINE is a non-profit, charitable organization supported by public donations.

Yes, I want to become a SINE partner. Enclosed in my tax-deductible contribution that will enable SINE to develop and support much-needed programs in our communities. I understand that through my generous gift, I will contribute to building a better future for Southwest Indiana.

Name: _____

Company/Organization/School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please complete and return this form with your check to:
the Southwest Indiana Network for Education, Wilder Center, Route 3, Box 12C, Oakland City, IN 47660.