

# Touchstone

Newsletter of the Basic School Eastern Consortia  
Housed at Virginia Tech, Falls Church, Virginia



## EASTERN CONSORTIA STAFF

- Dr. Judith J. Smith  
Director
- Dr. Ray Van Dyke  
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- Ms. Janet Williams,  
Director of Field Services
- Ms. Pat Broderick  
Senior Advisor
- Dr. Mary Ellen Bafumo,  
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## STAKEHOLDERS BOARD

- Patrick Callaghan
- Kim Dockery
- Kathy Elling
- Barbara Syrett
- John Quattrocchi
- Joy Warner

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## A Message from the Director

As we begin another school year we are filled with the energy of new beginnings. In education we always get one more chance, one more opportunity to find a way to reach a child, or one different way to teach the old and familiar. This is what renews us.

We in the Eastern Consortia also have a new opportunity to bring Basic School practitioners together for a fall workshop. As you may remember, our spring workshop was cancelled last year for lack of interest. This year we have researched the very best date and found three of our very best schools to host the event. Don't miss out on the November 18 workshop in Charlotte, NC, *The Basic School: Best Practices in Action*. This workshop will showcase three highly respected Basic Schools: Berryhill Elementary, Children's Community School, and David Cox Road Elementary. Whether you are a veteran or a beginner to the Basic School, there will be outstanding professional growth opportunities. Watch for the flyer to arrive in your school in the near future.

The North Carolina schools provide outstanding models for Basic School visitation:

*Berryhill Elementary* students received the *Barnes and Nobel Literacy Achievement Award* in 2003 for having made the most improvement in reading of any elementary school in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district during the academic year.

*Children's Community School* Director, Joy Warner, is a veteran Basic School mentor who opened *Children's Community* specifically as a Basic School charter school.

*David Cox Road Elementary*, a long time visitation site for the Basic School, is renowned for its ArtsTeach program in which students wrote and performed their own opera.

Come join us on November 18 to see these wonderful things and more in action! I hope this has whet your appetite!

-Judith Smith

## SAVE THIS DATE!

November 18, 2005  
Basic School Workshop  
Charlotte, NC

Workshop registration \$179  
Hotel \$79 per room per night

## Reflections on the Summer Institute: Vignettes from Barbara Stein

Attending a Basic School summer institute is both affirming and energizing. Every time I attend institutes, no matter what region, I am reminded of the very first institute in San Antonio with Dr. Boyer and Mary Ellen Bafumo in 1994. I was awestruck then and remain so with the power of the Basic School framework and the wonderful practitioners who embrace it.



I felt no less excited as I landed in Washington D.C. to attend and present for the Eastern Consortia's Summer Institute, "Jumping Through Hoops: Schools in an Age of Accountability." Upon arriving at the Crystal City Marriott in Arlington, the first thing I saw was a great big bus from New York—and the first person I saw was John Quattrocchi who told me he had brought almost 40 people to the institute. What a group! How very blessed Basic School folks are to benefit from the community of practitioners from all over the country. It is very reassuring to learn that the framework indeed holds up in the way we can com-



municate the important ideas we have about our work and the way it supports children and families.

That night as we gathered for dinner and a keynote speaker, I sat with Pat Broderick from Teaching K-8 Magazine and again felt the power of her wonderful support of the Basic School. We have really benefited from her close friendship with Dr. Boyer and her understanding of his legacy to us.



Friday night Teaching K-8 sponsored the author, Anthony Fredericks.

He flew out from the back of the stage and exploded onto the podium to share a high energy and idea-packed hour with us focused on ways to make science teaching connected to all literacy and also to make it exciting, authentic and fun. Audience participation was full blown as we added the physical actions to accompany his story. He also shared a myriad of journal ideas from real classrooms as ways of inspiring students. Many of us purchased his books to share with our students back home. Pat endorsed his newest title for teachers called, **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Success as a Teacher** by [Anthony D. Fredericks](#) A review I read by a

teacher said, "Fredericks' book gives no-nonsense, practical advice about every element of teaching, including the basic laws of how students learn, what to do on the first day, classroom management, lesson plans and curriculum building, managing stress." I brought back a copy for both the new Weber principal (Chris Gibson) and for Chris Rohret, our district staff development person.

Saturday morning at breakfast, we heard from Mary Lou Carney. She has just launched a wholesome magazine for teenage girls that emphasizes character and positive role models. It is called Sweet 16 and is written by teens. Mary Lou shared many stories from her life journey and reminded us of the power we have as educators to change students' lives.

Saturday's many concurrent sessions were planned to appeal to a wide range of learners. Response was enthusiastic to workshops peppered with hands-on and visual experiences. Sessions on making connections, assessment, school climate, writing, math, organizational identity, and tutoring were but a sample of the many offerings.



Sunday morning I presented book

talks using nonfiction with the best of the year's titles. I also shared my summer journey to Honduras with Heifer International. There are wonderful curriculum materials available from Heifer by request at [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) and the educator's study was so successful with our group this year that they hope to repeat some kind of project next year. All teachers interested in global issues of poverty and hunger as well as taking good care of the earth will find support for their classrooms. The work this humanitarian agency does is a wonderful connection with the Basic School.



Victor Herrera concluded the institute with inspiring words to send participants

on their way. He used music, shared how he keeps his staff focused on what is important, and handed out footprints for people to give to someone who had inspired them in their lives.

I am always so full when I leave an institute: ideas for classrooms, reflections about my own professional career, connections with people I am inspired by, and gratitude for the gift Dr. Boyer gave us to shape our daily practice with children.

I am reminded...

Fact: As each goose in a flock flaps its wings it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow.

By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Let's keep that thrust going on and going on. May you have a great and inspiring year.

-Barb Stein

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## Thoughts From Participants

*I think this was a wonderful conference. It really helped me with the whole Basic School concept.*

*Thank you! It was my first taste of the Basic School. It was very motivational and challenges me personally and professionally. The location was wonderful! Great food—loved the buffets!*

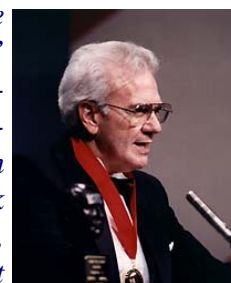
*I think it is very important to have this conference each year. I've had a great time meeting new people and seeing people I've met before.*

*This was wonderful—I really learned a lot! This is what all schools should be about! Great job!*

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## Ernest Boyer On Reflective Practitioners

*"Reflective practitioners" move from theory to practice, and from practice back to theory, which in fact makes theory,*



*then more authentic—something we're learning in education and medicine, in law and architecture, and all the rest. By making knowledge useful, we mean . . . building better lives.*

*-Ernest Boyer (October 1995)*

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## Hurricane Relief

We are saddened by the effects of the recent hurricanes on our Southern schools and children. Public school employees impacted by hurricane Katrina may apply for grants for housing, food, clothing, and other necessities. Please share this information with others who may need it.

For information and to apply, call toll-free 1-866-247-2239 or email: [katrinarealief@nea.org](mailto:katrinarealief@nea.org)

<http://www.nea.org/katrina/index.html>

<b>BASIC SCHOOL EASTERN CONSORTIA</b> <b>MEMBERSHIP 2005-06</b>
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**CONSORTIA STAFF**

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Dr. Judith Smith  
Director

*Regular School Membership . . . . . \$179.00*  
**Includes**

Dr. Ray Van Dyke  
Associate Director

Newsletter: Eight issues featuring member schools and their best practices, updates on the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Summer Institute, messages from the Director

Ms. Janet Williams  
Director of Field Operations

Certificate of Membership and Member Listing Directory

Ms. Pat Broderick  
Senior Advisor

*Comprehensive School Membership . . . . . \$795.00*  
**\$895.00 Value - Includes all of the above PLUS**

Dr. Mary Ellen Bafumo  
Senior Advisor

Registration for Four People for the Fall Basic School Workshop in North Carolina

*Individual Membership . . . . . \$79.00*  
**Designed for University/Central Office Personnel**  
**Includes Newsletter and Workshop Information**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
**BASIC SCHOOL EASTERN CONSORTIA 2005-2006**

\_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_\_  
School Individual

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address City/State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Telephone FAX

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person Telephone Email

Type of Membership:  
Regular School (\$179.00) \_\_\_\_\_  
Comprehensive School (\$795.00) \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual (\$79.00) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail application and check payable to:  
VA Tech Basic School Network  
Virginia Tech Northern Virginia Center  
7054 Haycock Rd., Falls Church, VA 22043



## *Basic School Eastern Consortia*

Basic School Eastern Consortia :  
Virginia Tech Northern Virginia Center  
7054 Haycock Road  
Falls Church, VA 22043

Phone: 703-538-8492  
Fax: 538-8485  
Email: jusmith8@vt.edu

**"Educating students to their full potential . . ."**

### **Basic School Fall Workshop November 18, 2005 Charlotte, NC**

#### **The Basic School: Best Practices in Action**

**Showcasing  
Berryhill Elementary  
David Cox Road  
David Cox Road**

- **Workshop cost is \$179.00 per person**
- **Fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, snacks, and materials**
- **Motel reservations can be made at Hilton Charlotte University Place at 1-800-445-8667**
- **Hotel rooms are guaranteed at \$79 per night**
- **Registration deadline is November 7, 2005**

**Call 703-538-8492 for application**

**We hope to see you there!**

## **Thank You School Renewals**

We thank the following schools for their prompt membership renewal in the Eastern Consortia.

If your school name does not appear below, be sure to send in your dues to the Eastern Consortia in order to receive the monthly newsletter and Summer Institute information.

- Alton Darby
- Berryhill
- Capshaw
- Children's Community
- Christiansburg
- Colegio Americano de Puebla
- Cornerstone Learning Community
- David Cox Road
- F.M. Kearns Primary
- Lake Seneca
- Longfellow
- Mantua
- Monterey
- Morgan
- North Hamilton County
- P.S. 7
- P.S. 225
- P.S. 253
- Price's Fork
- Skyview
- South Side
- St. Lucie
- Summit Charter
- Westlawn