

Friends Council
Education

Chronicles

OF QUAKER EDUCATION

FALL 2001

Learning as a Way of Life

Quakers believe in truth as continuing revelation, seeing life as a journey of learning from experiences and from one another. "Teaching and learning are a way of life" (Parker Palmer, Meeting for Learning). Through intergenerational programs, students see learning as a way of life and learn about life from elders. Many Friends schools have made intergenerational learning a major part of their curriculum. Here we highlight intergenerational collaborations at five schools: Abington Friends School, William Penn Charter School, Wilmington Friends School, New Garden Friends School, and Newtown Friends School.

Abington Friends School: New Technology

Abington Friends School (AFS) has a technology partnership called "Cyberfoulkes" with Foulkeways, a residential community for older adults in Gwynedd, Pennsylvania. In Cyberfoulkes, students teach elders how to use e-mail, the Internet, general word processing, and computer skills. Elders gain useful skills, children benefit from responsibility and leadership, and all enjoy connections made between the two communities.

Since 1996, the program has expanded to ten 4th and 5th grade students each year, who have taught more than 100 seniors skills in computers, e-mail, and the Internet. The students learn a lot about themselves as individuals through their roles as teachers and friends with the elders.

Lynne Mass, AFS's educational technology coordinator, says that the students love the interaction with the elders. "Cyberfoulkes gets the students out of the computer lab in into a human setting. It shows them how they can use their computer skills in the real world," Lynne reflects. "The students are good at computers and they take it for granted: the web and computer are like pencil and paper for them. When they see what a difference those skills can make-people can write to their relatives and research their illnesses-it amazes them. These students are opening a world for them."

After Foulkeways residents have learned to use e-mail, they serve as resources for the AFS community. Students can send e-mail to the elders' group list asking for information on a topic. Any resident with experience or knowledge in that area responds. Residents have shared information on missionary work in Africa during the 1940s, historic Philadelphia, and the World Wars. "This relationship has extended our school community," Lynne said.

William Penn Charter School: Art Partners

All 7th graders at the William Penn Charter School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, participate in a required course known as QUADS (Quakerism, Art, Design, and Service). A central component of the QUADS curriculum is the service learning relationship between the Penn Charter students and the elders at Stapeley Hall, a Quaker-founded home for the elderly in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. Religion teacher Irene McHenry and middle school art teachers Ruth McGee and Crosby Brown designed the course in which the PC students and the Stapeley residents get to know each other through a program called "Art Partners." In this program, they collaboratively study artists and create art.

The Art Partners project includes the development of many skills: communication, teamwork, problem-solving, two- and three-dimensional art, and reflective writing. "The habits of learning emphasized are reflection, respect and understanding of differences, adaptability, flexibility, and using all of the senses for learning," Irene says. "The most important aspect, though, is the beauty of the relationships which develop as the students and the elders work together." One student reflects, "My partner was a little shy, just like me, but at the end we were really clicking. It was meaningful because not only was I making someone's day, but they were making mine."

Wilmington Friends School: Elder and Child

"Elder and Child," a year long, one on one program at Wilmington Friends School, Wilmington, Del., joins elders and 2nd graders for service-learning projects in the classroom and correspondence with each other about childhood experiences. Teacher Hope Hawkins coordinates the program, recruiting elders from a variety of places including the Academy of Lifelong Learning, Trinity Episcopal Church, and the Wilmington Senior Center. "I specifically look for people who have energy—who really love life and children, who will serve as good role models for the children," Hope says.

In their letters to one another, elders and children share what second grade was like then and what it's like now, write about holiday traditions, and brainstorm ideas for service projects. Journal topics center around childhood, because as Hope says, they all have equal experience with it. "Every conversation gives students an insight into history." Hope describes detailed handwritten journals, some including drawings, photographs, or postcards. "There is constant learning and exchange between them," she says.

Hope emphasizes: "The elders and children are both teachers, both learners in this experience." At one meeting, students and their elder partners complete a service project together. At another meeting, the partners participate in Meeting of the Minds, a side-by-side research project in which the student and elder each choose a famous person to research. The elder models the process for the student, bringing in research materials and notecards, researching alongside the student. Hope Hawkins's vision for the future of the program is to extend the side-by-side learning by students and elders, having elders in the classroom more often, learning along with the students.

New Garden Friends School: Elder Resources

In Greensboro, North Carolina, New Garden Friends School service-learning students form separate groups to work with elders at three different centers. One group interviews residents and draws their portraits. Another group focuses on music and dancing, including hits from the past and karaoke. Last year, a new group formed to focus on research. The students would research the 20th century, one decade at a time, write a script, and perform a newscast with the highlights of the decade for the residents.

Newtown Friends/Pennswood Village: Building Together

Intergenerational collaborations build and strengthen communities, sometimes literally! Newtown Friends School's relationship with Pennswood Village, begun in 1980, has even included site planning to better share campus resources. Pennswood residents and students visit each other at Pennswood and at school. In "Friday Friends" groups, residents lead a variety of activities for students: they share toy collections, bake cookies; they make kits for AFSC outreach to African children; and take a tour of edible plants in the woods.

Pennswood residents also visit NFS and help in the classroom in many ways—reading stories to kindergarteners, providing extra help with classwork, helping in the library, and learning computer skills in the school's media center. Residents have served as resources for studies in the 1920s, illnesses of the elderly, the United Nations, and Bucks County in the early 1900s. It is a partnership that is important to both communities.

In many Friends schools, generations are coming together to share in a search for truth, and every one of them benefits as a result. "It is a joy to be part of that school. It restores your soul," one Pennswood resident said.

Friends Council on Education *A New Team Vision*

After a time of transitions, Friends Council on Education begins this year with a new

team. In July, Irene McHenry became the new executive director and Sarah Sweeney-Denham began as associate director of programs and publications. Carolyn Friedman, who worked on programs and publications last year, took on a new position for the Council, associate director for finance and development. Executive assistant April Diop navigated the changes, and continues to support all of the Council's work.

As they began their work together this summer, the FCE staff discussed their goals for Friends Council on Education.

What is your vision for the year? What work do we need to do to foster the Quaker spirit within Friends schools?

Irene McHenry: My vision for the work of the Council this year involves strengthening, revitalizing, engaging, and creating:

- 1) strengthening the Council administrative team as we share information and deliver services to the schools;
- 2) revitalizing the complex web of networking relationships among our Friends schools;
- 3) engaging teachers, administrators, and board members in leadership development for our schools;
- 4) creating new opportunities for dialogues about diversity, moral growth, and spiritual development in Friends schools.



The Friends Council on Education team assembles: (front) Sarah Sweeney-Denham, (back) Irene McHenry, Carolyn Friedman, and April Diop.

Sarah Sweeney-Denham: Some of the work I found most rewarding as a teacher centered around discovering how Quakerism can help adolescents in their search for identity and meaning in daily life. Teachers and students are longing to learn more about Quakerism and to talk about the experiences they have in meeting for worship and in meeting for worship for business. Schools have time for silent worship, but have trouble finding time in which to process the experience. On Equakes, teachers are asking for ideas for Quaker curriculum and orientation. My vision for the year is to learn more about how teachers and students are helping this to happen in their schools and help them share information with each other through the FCE network.

Carolyn Friedman: After a period of transition and with a new leadership team, it is a perfect time for FCE to redefine its direction and purpose. The excitement for FCE is the number of areas in which we can be helpful and provide guidance and support with our publications, programs, and consulting. We provide invaluable service to Friends schools: introducing non-Quaker educators to Quakerism; supporting heads of schools, especially

small schools; helping new schools get started; and helping all those groups network and support each other. I think we need to collect information from Board members and the schools about what we do that is important to Friends schools.

April Diop: I would like to see the Council promote more involvement from the member schools at the nursery and preschool levels. These schools could really benefit from increased involvement in publications and workshops offered by FCE. We need to help them see what their membership can mean. Also, I am encouraged by the work FCE is doing to promote diversity in Quaker education. I would like to see diversity as a mantra for Friends education, as Quaker values and conflict resolution are. With our work on diversity in workshop facilitation and publications, we are headed in the right direction.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Welcome to the newest members of the Friends Council on Education Board of Directors.

Lisa Carbone is the business manager at Moorestown Friends School, Moorestown, New Jersey.

Linda Patterson is a first grade teacher at Friends Select School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Ken Jacobsen is the head of school at Olney Friends School, Barnesville, Ohio.

Bruce Stewart is the head of school at Sidwell Friends School, Washington, D.C.

Michi Tashjian retired in June from Friends' Central School, Wynnwood, Pennsylvania, where over the years she taught, served as lower school principal, and worked as diversity coordinator.

NEW HEADS

Welcome to these educational leaders new to Friends school headship!

Barclay Friends School: **Alice Otten**

Friends Community School: **Tom Goss**

Friends School of Atlanta: **James D. Withers**

Friends School Haverford: **Martha Bryans**

George Fox Friends School: **Linda Uberseder**

Media-Providence Friends School: **Lynn Oberfield**

Moorestown Friends School: **Laurence Van Meter**

State College Friends School: **Larry Boggess**

West Chester Friends School: **Matthew H. Bradley**

NEW QUAKER CURRICULA AVAILABLE FROM FCE

- **Meeting for Worship: Written for Students by Students, by 8th grade students at Delaware Valley Friends School, .50 each.** Brochure covering basic questions about meeting for worship and strategies for focused meditation.
- **QUADS: 7th Grade Quakerism, Art & Design, and Service, curriculum developed by Dr. Irene McHenry, William Penn Charter School, \$5.00** QUADS integrates the study of Quakerism, art, and service learning. Students learn about Quaker beliefs, as well as the basic principles and elements of design and aspects of art history through a variety of art projects completed with elderly residents of Stapeley Hall in Germantown, Pennsylvania.
- **Quakerism, middle school curriculum developed by teacher Melinda Wenner Bradley, Friends Academy, \$5.00.** A course covering basic beliefs and principles of Quakerism as they relate to the school community. Students study Quaker testimonies, read and discuss biblical stories and symbolism, and explore each person's "mission or calling to others."
- **Taking Parents Along on the Spiritual Journey: An Introduction to Quakerism for Parents at Friends Schools, developed by teacher Elaine Crauderueff, Friends' Central School, \$5.00.** A curriculum guide covering basic Quakerism, worship sharing and Quaker values. This course helps parents at Friends schools understand and support the Quaker aspects of Friends schools, and nourish them as spiritual seekers as well.

Many additional resources are available!

Call for more information on Quaker resources:

o Friends Council on Education: (215) 241-7245

o Pendle Hill Bookstore: (800) 742-3150 ext. 2

o Friends General Conference, book orders: (800) 966-4556

- o Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Religious Education
Resources for student programs: (215) 241-7008
Resources for adult programs: (215) 241-7182

*To be a human being
Is
To be thankful to God*

-David DeLeon, grade 2, Friends School Haverford

David's poem was first published last spring as part of "Global Voices: Poets for the Planet and Her People," an anthology written, edited, and produced by students at Friends School Haverford. "Global Voices" is one of the projects funded in part by a grant from Friends Council on Education. Edited by teacher Leslie Hahne, Global Voices is a children's poetry journal that seeks to use children's words to illuminate the Quaker testimonies of integrity, equality, service, community, simplicity, and peace. Contact Leslie Hahne for submission guidelines, lhahne@juno.com. ■

TECHNOLOGY & YOUR SCHOOL

How does your school use technology to enhance its program? What new uses have you found? In what ways has your school's use of technology changed in recent years? What new issues have surfaced surrounding technology uses?

FCE WANTS TO KNOW!

Contact Sarah Sweeney-Denham with information about how you and your students use computers, the internet, interesting programs, etc. Your program may be highlighted in future Chronicles features or on Equakes, the Friends Education listserv.

Email FCESarah@aol.com, or phone: (215) 241-7245.

CLICK HERE FOR
**FCE Grants
Awarded
2001-2002**

EQUAKES

IS WAITING FOR YOU!

Educators from all over the country regularly converse about issues in Friends education on the Equakes listserv. Participants ask questions, discuss concerns, and share discoveries and resources on everything from school governance to field trips and creative teaching tips.

To subscribe to Equakes, email your name and your relation to Quaker education to QuakerEd@aol.com

Quaker Schools are Religious Schools

Orientation to Meeting for Worship at Westtown School

What makes a Quaker school a Quaker school? Often, Quaker values and testimonies are emphasized without being named directly for the students. But many schools are taking extra steps to help students clarify and process the Quaker experience. This is the first in a series of articles spotlighting ways in which different schools go about creating caring, moral communities through instilling knowledge and respect for Quaker faith and practice.

New students and faculty at the Westtown School begin each year with an orientation to meeting for worship, initially developed last fall. "Our goal was to infuse the new students and faculty with a vision for why we gather in the manner we do, with enthusiasm for the process, and with anticipation for the mystery that is to be found there," said Deanna Mayer, developer and coordinator of the program. New students learn about general behavioral guidelines as well as strategies to make the time a powerful experience. Deanna used Chip Poston's Orientation to Quakerism and Meeting for Worship as a model. "We need to build the expectations for a meaningful experience in meeting for worship and our community. We expect to be inspired. We expect wonder. We expect mystery. We expect to remain open to the Spirit. We expect to act respectfully."

Deanna developed a general orientation meeting, followed by a series of meetings in small groups. At the hour-long general orientation, a list of do's and don'ts for behavior in meeting is translated into positive statements posted throughout the room. Groups of students and faculty discuss the reasons they see for each statement, report to the whole group, and are given historical/informative context by a facilitator. In this active process, students come up with their own reasons behind why Friends "allow for a time of reflection between messages," and "work to 'tune in' to the sense of the whole meeting, which is deeper than just your individual thoughts."



Meeting for Worship at Delaware Valley Friend School, Paoli, PA.

*"We expect to be inspired.
We expect wonder. We expect
mystery. We expect to remain
open to the Spirit. We expect
to act respectfully."*

Once the school year has begun, new members of the community meet in small groups every other week. On the off-week, they attend meeting for worship with the rest of the school. "This schedule of action/reflection/action/reflection allows them to work through this new experience of meeting for worship, to ask the questions of how to use that time, and how to have a better experience in that time," Deanna noted.

Each group is led by a faculty member and a student. Student leaders are chosen through the 10th grade Quakerism course, taught by Deanna. "They are students who are vocal and enthusiastic about meeting and Quakerism." Deanna continues, "It's important that students hear about meeting from their peers. It's not just an adult telling them what to do. These are students for whom meeting has become important." Session topics include reflecting and discussing responses to various concerns and worries, such as "I worry that I won't have a truly 'spiritual' experience in Meeting," and "I wonder how worshipping in this way will be the same or different from how I have grown up worshipping. I wonder why Quakers do it in this way." Other sessions might include discussion or worship sharing around quotes taken from Faith and Practice, or other readings about gathered meetings or knowing when to speak in meeting.

Call FCE for more information on Westtown's format for Meeting for Worship Orientation, to order a copy of Chip Poston's Quakerism Orientation program, or to share information about your school's Quakerism program: (215) 241-7245.

*R*eflections *Letter from the Executive Director*

Dear Friends,

My enthusiasm for the mission of the Friends Council on Education and the various tasks involved in the work of the Council is abundant. This enthusiasm grows exponentially from collaboration with my teammates here in the Council office - April Diop, Sarah Sweeney-Denham and Carolyn Friedman - and from every conversation with teachers, administrators, board members and Friends who consult with the Council. I am inspired by the mission of the Council, which is to draw Friends schools together in unity of aim and spirit, supporting Friends education as a powerful, constructive and necessary force in the world today. My enthusiasm deepens from the knowing that Friends schools have a pedagogy, which addresses the spiritual vacuum in modern culture and brings an approach to the resolution of conflict, which is of great need in the public schools in our country. We can make a difference by engaging in dialogues about moral and spiritual growth in Friends schools, independent and public schools across the country and in the international education community.

I believe a compelling task for our schools today is to continue increasing the diversity of our student, parent, faculty and board communities, so that we can continue to learn from the opportunities that diversity brings. We have a moral responsibility to both learn about

and work to correct the structural inequality, which exists in our country and in the world. Building relationships through service learning in our neighborhood communities and through our liaisons with our global affiliates are steps to accomplish this necessary task. As Friends schools, we must take leadership in creating knowledge in the service of justice throughout the world.

Friends believe that each person has the capacity for goodness and a responsibility to attain that goodness. Our schools create deliberate moral communities-communities that value the process of reflection and inquiry, and are rooted in the fundamental Quaker belief in truth as a process of continuing revelation. Quaker pedagogy is based on the principles of teachers as caring facilitators of the learning process, dialogue as the foundation of learning in the classroom, and curricula reflecting Friends testimonies and values. Friend's schools support the development of persons who are creative thinkers, peacemakers, and confident humanitarians, contributing to responsive and responsible public leadership in the world. The Friends Council of Education supports the development of teachers and leaders who can make this possible.

Irene E. McHenry, Executive Director

