Lessons Learned from a Unique Collaboration Opportunity between two Noyce Programs at two Different Universities

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Lessons Learned from a Unique Collaboration Opportunity between two Noyce Programs at two Different Universities

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Two Noyce Programs
The Rice University Noyce Master Teaching Fellowship Program (RU-MTF) - DUE #1556006
Pl: Anne Papakonstantinou
Co-Pls: Richard Parr, Judy Radigan, Richard Tapia

The Louisiana Mathematics Masters in the Middle (LaM³) - DUE #1240054
Pl: Peter Sheppard
Co-Pls: Patricia Beaulieu, Melissa Gallagher
Goals

The overarching goal of this collaboration was to have teachers from the two programs connect with and learn from one another and share/exchange ideas about effective teaching strategies for successful mathematics instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Project Goal</th>
<th>Visit goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RU-MTF to develop leadership, mentoring, and adult education</td>
<td>to interact with other Noyce teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaM³ to influence the instructional practices of their colleagues</td>
<td>to see observe classrooms outside their regular education context</td>
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## Overview of the Visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>February 12</th>
<th>February 13</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eight LaM³ Middle School Teachers</strong></td>
<td>Observed one Noyce &amp; two non-Noyce teachers</td>
<td>Observed one Noyce, one non-Noyce teacher &amp; met with instructional coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(HS 1) Observed one Noyce, one non-Noyce teacher &amp; met with instructional specialist</td>
<td>(HS 2) Observed one Noyce &amp; two non-Noyce teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Two LaM³ High School Teachers</strong></td>
<td>(HS 1) Observed one Noyce, one non-Noyce teacher &amp; met with instructional specialist</td>
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</table>
## Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They expected to share:</th>
<th>LaM³</th>
<th>RU-MTF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                         | • Strategies and activities for student engagement  
|                         | • Classroom management strategies  
|                         | • NCTM’s Principles to Actions | • Technology integration  
|                         | | • How success is defined  
|                         | | • Motivating students, in particular, at-risk students |
## Expectations (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They expected to learn:</th>
<th>LaM³</th>
<th>RU-MTF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Differences between TX and LA standards</td>
<td>• Similarities and differences between their teaching and LaM³ teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New strategies and ideas about effective teaching</td>
<td>• Getting some feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New ways of reaching other teachers and impacting communities</td>
<td>• New teaching strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New ideas for productive struggle</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New approaches to motivate students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brainstorming Activity - 1

- At your table take 5 minutes to discuss:
  - (1) How could similar collaborations be organized?
  - (2) What would you expect to share from a cross project collaboration?
  - (3) What would you expect to learn from a cross project collaboration?

- Share with the whole audience
Middle School Perspective

- Overview Pin Oak Middle School
- What did UL-L teachers experience while at Pin Oak MS
- What did Pin Oak MS teachers gain from UL-L visit.
In the Houston Independent School District, very large urban school setting

Located in a more affluent section of the city

Application-only school, students are from everywhere in the city
(transportation is provided)
Middle School Perspective
Pin Oak Middle School

High academic performance has been maintained for the sixteen years of its existence

Language magnet school

High school credit classes offered for Algebra, Geometry, Integrated Physics & Chemistry, Spanish, French, German, Theater
Most of the Rice University Noyce Fellows are high school teachers, but most U. L. Lafayette Fellows are in middle school.

The UL-L teachers requested middle school observation, so they all came to Pin Oak, where there is one Noyce Fellow.
Since the overall program at Pin Oak is has been successful, we opted to give the Fellows a broad cross-section of math instruction at Pin Oak.

The Fellows visited in all levels of math instruction, from sixth grade math with UL-L and special education co-teachers to high school geometry. They spent the day with us. At the end of the day, we all met together to debrief and discuss the experience.
High School Perspective

- Overview of Lamar High School
- What did UL-L teachers experience while at Lamar HS
- What did Lamar HS teachers gain from UL-L visit.
Lamar High School is an International Baccalaureate School with over 3200 students. We are a “Flipping Classroom” and “Kagan Structure” Campus.
High School Perspective

Two UL-L High School Teachers observed Pre-IB Geometry class facilitated by Ms. Kamla (Kagan structure specialist) and Pre-IB Precalculus class facilitated by Lan Wu (flipping classroom specialist).
One of the UL-L high school teachers commented:

“In Kamla’s Geometry class, the classroom atmosphere was very structured. The transitions were smooth, students knew their roles and they worked well together. I plan to learn more about these methods and will try these with my math essentials class. I believe these students, arranged in groups according to this method, would work well and hopefully spark more math conversations and participation by all.”
The other UL-L high school teacher remarked:

“\textit{In Ms. Wu’s class, she has created quite a number of video lessons for use with her precalculus class. The flipping classroom method she used would work well with my precalculus students. Also the class dojo app she used encouraged all students to work within their groups because the students could use the points each group collected toward their next major assessment.}”

\underline{My YouTube videos}

\underline{Blendspace Lesson plan}

\underline{Class Dojo}
What did we learn?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What worked</th>
<th>What did NOT work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Everything went well logistically</td>
<td>• Many expectations of master teachers fell short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some expectations of master teachers were met</td>
<td>• Continued communication between the two groups was not achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not enough interest for follow-up discussions from teachers</td>
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Facilitators/ Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Planning ahead</td>
<td>• FUNDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication among project directors and co-directors and among teachers</td>
<td>• Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High engagement from both sides</td>
<td>• First experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad goals</td>
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RUSMP Noyce Fellow Hosts Louisiana Noyce Fellows

By Dr. Anne Papakonstantinou,
Rice University School Mathematics Project

Three master mathematics teachers from the Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP)’s National Science Foundation Robert Noyce Fellowship Program hosted ten Noyce Fellows from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette together with their professor, Dr. Peter Sheppard, earlier this month.

The ten visitors were guests of Charlie Burrell at Bellaire High School, Lan Wu at Lamar High School, and Dr. Gail Hamilton at Pin Oak Middle School. The collaboration between the two groups of teachers started remotely in the fall with discussions about mathematics instruction. While in Houston, the visitors attended classes and planning meetings, and participated in conversations about important issues in education.

Guests were in awe of the high achievement levels that they observed at all of the schools, yet with each school retaining its own unique identity. They felt students inherited the schools’ culture of success and achievement.

One teacher commented that “Because of this experience, I will now be more aware of teachable moments and take advantage of them.” Another visitor mentioned “I was reminded of the importance of strong instructional leadership. It is critical for the teacher to lay the foundation for learning. With this base of knowledge, I observed students easily transitioning into activities that were rich and meaningful.”

RUSMP Director of Research, Dr. Adem Ekmekci, noted that “this was a unique collaboration between two groups of master teachers from different states and educational contexts.

“'A preliminary study revealed that teachers felt extremely positive about observing different school cultures and mathematics classrooms. As teachers reported, it was a great learning experience for both groups, and they all look forward to building upon this initiative by furthering the collaboration between the two groups.”

Teachers in the RUSMP program enjoy conversation at lunch.
What else could have been done?

- Having a reciprocity: RU-MTF teachers to visit LaM³ teachers (Funding?? Resources??)
- Having a more focused visit (specific goals, more structure in terms of specific activities to pay attention during the observations)
- Diverse set of schools (more representative of the district)
- Debriefing with both observed and observing teachers after each lesson
- Ample time for group discussions involving both observed and observing teachers
- Pre-visit conferences or opportunities for more communication among observed and observing teachers
Brainstorming Activity - 2

- At your table take a few minutes to discuss:
  1. Seeing the successes and challenges of the Rice-UL-L collaboration, what do you foresee as the barriers and facilitators if you were to engage in a similar collaboration?
  2. How can the facilitators empower your teachers?
  3. How can the barriers be overcome?

- Share with the whole audience
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Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.
For more information and for a link to this presentation please visit:

https://rusmp.rice.edu/about/noyce
Link to give feedback on sessions:  
http://tinyurl.com/WRNA19

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