Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the Fall 2011 School Year! As the new Editor-in-Chief of SoundBytes, I look forward to highlighting the events in education that take place this school year. My mission is to be an advocate of students, teachers and to give secondary education majors a voice extending past the academic halls of Rider University. I look forward to reading your stories and publishing your writings. May you have a wonderful semester full of new discoveries, new students and new lessons! With our voice, we will revolutionize the future of education.

- Rebecca Davis
Class of 2013

* The Minor Key to Success *

A new option for secondary education allows students to become certified in special education.

Thanks to the dedication of Dr. Michele Wilson-Kamens and Dr. Diane Casale-Giannola, a minor in special education is available to secondary education majors. Since Rider is a small, private university, we had to go through a long and arduous process before the minor to became a reality. Dr. Kamens states, “Special education is an area in need of excellent teachers. The knowledge and skills students will learn in this program will help them understand how to reach students with disabilities, as well as provide an inclusive classroom environment.” The amount of time required to complete this program will depend on your content area. The courses themselves are sequential. There is also the option to receive certification at the graduate level. As for the education process at the secondary level, “It changes. Students are offered services in different ways and the content gets more difficult,” says Dr. Kamens. Dr. Giannola adds, “Students have higher expectations at this level. Support is critical in order to ensure students meet secondary level standards.” On a final note by Dr. Kamens and Dr. Giannola, the goal of this program is for Rider teachers to “Become outstanding leaders and meet the needs of all learners.”
Technology Changing Teaching

The recent advances in technology have allowed teachers to reach beyond chalkboards, erasers and pens.

TRANSFORMING LESSONS, ONE BOARD AT A TIME

Samantha Durham

“Get to know the Promethean, it will be the reason you get hired.” That was the advice I was given while observing a sixth grade social studies classroom in my first weeks of student teaching. Since then, I have been taking every opportunity to incorporate the Promethean ActivBoard. (Equivalent to a SmartBoard) into my sixth grade language arts lessons.

I started off small by using the technology as a way to reach diverse learners, having the “Do Now,” or instructions for various activities projected on the screen. As I grew more comfortable, I integrated the Promethean into more complex lessons. For example, in my unit on persuasive writing, my students and I used the board to identify, highlight, and underline the persuasive traits of the essay. What might have otherwise been a lifeless activity, turned into an innovative and interactive lesson.

The incorporation of the Promethean, or any technology, allowed my students to interact with the lesson. Instead of taking notes, answering questions, or filling in worksheets, they were able to get up and be a part of the learning process. The technology was new and unfamiliar to both the students and myself. My students recognized my effort to create a fun and beneficial classroom environment, and they were eager to learn with me.

ARE YOU READY TO TEACH USING TECHNOLOGY?

A survey of the spring 2011 cohort of math, science, and english secondary student teachers found that they use these types of technology in the classroom.
From Inside the Classroom

Two firsthand accounts of teaching from very different perspectives.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS: EXPANDING HIGH SCHOOL BUSINESS STRATEGIES
Francesca DiMaria

Recently, high school business education has expanded to include courses such as law, entrepreneurship, and international business. High school students today have more business education electives to choose from that will affect the world in which they live.

During the spring 2011 semester, I had the pleasure of teaching Honors International Business at Moorestown High School. The course focuses on understanding how culture and social institutions differ and affect international business. Students use case studies, current events, and films from international powerhouses such as McDonald’s as examples demonstrating positive organizational and cultural adaptations. The course is a great overview of the challenges and opportunities in international business. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 21.4% of all college students in 2007-2008 (the highest percentage) were business majors. With statistics like this, it is important for high schools to offer students a wide range of business courses.

MY FIRST DAY STORY
Brittany Gajewski

Walking down the halls was like entering a jungle. Boys and girl running and screaming to their friends who were only inches away. Teachers are outside of the classrooms yelling at their kids to “get to class” and “not to forget their books.”

My first day started off pretty controlled. The students sat in rows as the teacher asked them to read the answers to the homework. This eighth grade class exhibited the “best possible behavior”, especially in front of a new face. This class was a teacher’s dream; the willingness, responsiveness, and politeness of the students was almost overwhelming.

After first period, I walked up the stairs to a much different setting. This class was not the “controlled group of students” that the eighth graders demonstrated so perfectly; this was seventh grade. The students were disruptive when the teacher was talking, they passed notes during class, and left the room whenever they felt it was necessary. But what I found was a group of students who weren’t always disruptive but needed some individual attention. That’s where I came in to help, to teach, and to learn from these kids.

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Awards to Graduating Seniors

Graduating seniors celebrate at the student teacher wrap-up luncheon in May. From left to right are Jessica Haughton (Mathematics), Tara Vacha (English), Heather Koshar (ESL), Dana Blair (English) and Nadine Cottrell (Business Education). These students were recognized at the University Awards Banquet for outstanding achievement in their content areas.

Two new technology (TEC) courses that will be of interest to secondary education students have been approved. They are TEC 206 Teaching and Presenting with Technology and TEC 207 Social Media for Education.

TEC 206 will provide an opportunity for students to explore techniques through which technology can be integrated into teaching and professional presentations.

TEC 207 will introduce students to the structure and culture of social media and how social networking applies to the educational environment.

Three other courses have been modified to include new content. They are:

- TEC 208 Internet Ethics
- TEC 203 Desktop Publishing and Web Page Design
- TEC 204 Electronic Spreadsheets and Classroom Management Software

Other one-credit TEC courses that will continue to be offered are SmartBoard and Electronic Portfolios.