

ASCD IN ACTION



ASCD Photo

ASCD'S MISSION:
**DEVELOPING
LEADERSHIP FOR
QUALITY IN
EDUCATION FOR
ALL STUDENTS**



URBAN MIDDLE GRADES NETWORK FOCUSES ON IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The 15 participating schools and systems in ASCD's Urban Middle Grades Network (UMGN) are striving to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged youth. Last summer they convened their third meeting in Vail, Colorado, to refine their five-year school improvement plans in major content areas—writing, read-

ing, mathematics, and speaking.

Participants also worked on grant proposals sponsored by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation—underwriters of the UMGN project. In December, five sites were awarded \$30,000 each, effective January 1, 1991: Wichita, Kansas; San Antonio, Texas; Seattle, Washington; Long Beach, California; and Denver, Colorado. The money is being used to support staff development initiatives to improve instruction and help students achieve high standards in one or more content areas. Grant recipients have one year to implement their proposed staff development plans.

Although not funded for this round of awards, the New Orleans, Louisiana, and Tucson, Arizona, teams were invited to submit revised proposals because of the potential merit of their initial grant submissions.

Finally, the 15 teams met again February 6-9 in Miami to revisit teams' progress in implementing the writing and communication components of their school improvement plans. Assessment issues in each area were also addressed, and the latest research, practice, and literature in mathematics and reading were presented by featured speakers and workshop leaders, including Steve Parsons, an 8th grade teacher from Fairfax, Virginia, who demonstrated research-based mathematics strategies with youngsters from Mays Middle School; Marie Carbo, who demonstrated strategies that have dramatically accelerated youngsters' reading achievement and turned unmotivated readers into avid readers; and Beverly Bimes-Michalak and Jim Chesebro, who offered concrete suggestions for increasing students' abilities to communicate clearly.

Project Facilitator is Helené Hodges, Director of Research and Information for ASCD.



TAKE ACTION

Join the **Network for School University Partnerships**, which works to promote dialogue between schools and universities and develops professional practice schools, summer institutes, and ongoing programs during the school year to benefit schools and universities. For further information contact:

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TAKE NOTE

If you are interested in writing for *Educational Leadership*, please keep in mind our audience: practicing K-12 educators. The themes for the upcoming 1991-92 issues are now available and are published frequently. See page 79. If you would like a copy of our *Guidelines for Writers*, call ASCD's Publications Department (703-549-9110) and ask for Terry Lawhorn, ext. 427, Jennifer Beun, ext. 402, or Becky DeRigge, ext. 404. These new *Guidelines* will be available in early March.



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Annual Conferences
1991, San Francisco, March 16-19
1992, New Orleans, April 4-7
1993, Washington, D.C., March 27-30 (50th anniversary of the founding of ASCD)
1994, Chicago, March 19-22

Upcoming Mini-conferences
March 13-15, 1991, *Preconference Institutes*, San Francisco
April 10-12, 1991, *Whole Language*, Alexandria, Virginia
April 24-26, 1991, *Staff Development Leadership Retreat*, San Antonio, Texas

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