

Springfield Springfield



Nikki Moore, the first graduate of the Springfield Grow Your Own Program, with her class, Fall 2007

The Springfield GYO partnership was funded in 2006, one of two planning grants funded “spontaneously” – without extensive consultation with GYO Illinois consultants.

The partner organizations are:

Springfield Public Schools
Springfield Urban League
University of Illinois Springfield
Lincoln Land Community College
**Springfield College in Illinois/
Benedictine University**
Springfield Educational Association

Springfield Public Schools is the lead organization and fiscal agent on the grant.

The Cohort: The Springfield cohort has 35 active participants, all of whom have at least some previous college experience. Ten are men, and 27 are African-American; their median age is 37. Thirty-four are employed, 28 full-time; 22 are currently working in the schools. Seventeen have dependent children in their households. All but three live in Springfield.

The Springfield Consortium would like to recognize the partnership of the Springfield Public School District 186 and Springfield College in Illinois/Benedictine University for its collaboration and willingness to think “outside the box” to find solutions that support the teacher candidates. As a result of this collaboration, we have our first graduate and teacher after only the first year of implementation.

To illustrate: the teacher candidate had not received the results of her content area test in time to be enrolled into student teaching in January. This meant that she would not start student teaching until the fall, or until after completion of the 16 weeks of student teaching, then she would not be available for hire until 2nd semester of the following year. But through collaboration with the teacher placement coordinator for the district, in April she was placed in a year-round balanced calendar school that gave her an additional four weeks during the summer break.

Midway through student teaching the candidate received a job offer. At a meeting of the Human Resource Director, Program Coordinator of GYO/Coordinator of Recruitment, Student Teacher Advisor of the college, and the principal, we decided that we could change the student teaching placement to the grade level the teacher would contractually teach when she returned the three weeks prior to the start of the school year. The student teacher would attend the new teacher orientation and would start in the classroom of her assignment with a substitute assigned by the principal to be her cooperating teacher. When she completed her student teaching she would apply for her substitute certificate and be assigned



Cynthia Shambley, Consortium Coordinator, (Springfield Public Schools) with cohort members Tives Gardner, Belinda Ware, and Fallon Rowl.