Department of Curriculum & Instruction Research and Creative Activities Fair

May 7, 2025

Hosted by **Dr. Suzanne Porath** and introduced by **Dr. Todd Goodson**, the virtual fair spotlighted five scholar-practitioners who shared works in progress spanning literacy pedagogy, college readiness, data-driven instruction, social-emotional learning, and inclusive practice. Presenters spoke in (mostly) alphabetical order, fielded lively Q-and-A, and were encouraged to turn their projects into conference proposals and multimedia contributions to *Literacy Connections*. The collegial atmosphere underscored the department's commitment to actionable research that directly enriches classrooms.

Kerri Anderson — *Poetry SmackDown: Engaging Pre-Service Teachers With Illustrated Children's Poetry*

Kerri Anderson showcased *"Poetry SmackDown,"* a bracket-style tournament that immerses pre-service teachers in illustrated children's poetry collections for Pre-K–2. Across four competitive rounds which were voted on by cover analysis, picture walks, expressive readings, and fluency mini-lessons—teacher candidates designed and tested activities that would build young learners' prosody and engagement while deepening their own knowledge of under-used poetic genres.

Miriam Barton — *Accountability, Experiential Learning, and Oracy: Curbing AI Copy-Paste Culture in Dual-Enrollment ELA*

Miriam Barton reported on strategies for countering copy-and-paste AI dependence in dual-enrollment English classes. Emphasizing firm no-late-work policies, experiential learning, narrative writing, conversation guides, and oracy-rich icebreakers, her research and practice synthesis argues that high expectations and active, accountable classroom cultures strengthen students' critical thinking, writing autonomy, and collegiate readiness.

Brandi Peach — *What Happens Between the Benchmarks? Building Data-Literate Teachers Through Micro-PDs and Coaching*

Brandi Peach outlined an intervention case study, *"What Happens Between the Benchmarks,"* exploring how micro-PDs, opt-in data coaching, and observation cycles cultivate K-3 teachers' data literacy. Distinguishing classroom assessment data from system metrics, she proposes a practical formative-tracking workflow that empowers educators to make timely, high-impact instructional decisions for learners.

## Ramsha Usman Khan — *School Culture as a Catalyst for Teacher Well-Being and SEL in Rural Pakistan*

Ramsha Usman Khan presented findings from a qualitative study of eight rural Pakistani elementary teachers integrating movement-based mindfulness and CASEL SEL competencies. Monthly reflections revealed that supportive school culture—trusting leadership, peer collegiality, and celebrations—buffered political unrest and climate disruptions, nurturing teacher wellbeing and sustainable classroom social-emotional practices for students' holistic growth.

Mary Middleton — *Professional Development That Sticks: Equipping Secondary Teachers for Inclusive Practice*

Mary Middleton detailed an ongoing study on the impact of concise, recurring Monday professional-development sessions on secondary teachers' inclusion practices. Semi-structured interviews show most participants lacked post-degree special-education training; targeted refreshers on accommodations, ADHD, and autism raised awareness but highlighted need for ready-to-use differentiated lesson templates and sustained coaching support.

Conclusion & Next Steps
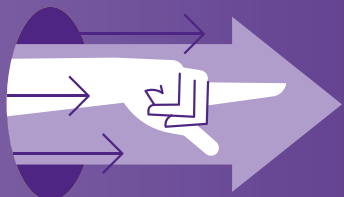
Collectively, the evening's presentations affirmed our department's spirit: rigorous, classroom-rooted inquiry can—and should—translate into practical strategies that elevate teaching, learning, and well-being across diverse contexts. Whether leveraging poetry to ignite fluency, redefining accountability for AI-era writers, demystifying data cycles, nurturing SEL in challenging environments, or scaffolding inclusive practice, each scholar illuminated actionable pathways for educators and researchers alike.

Call for Participation — December 2025 Research & Creative Activities Fair

Planning has already begun for next year's fair, scheduled for **December 2025**. We hope to have. Both a virtual fair and an in-person fair in the EdCat Lounge. A formal call for participation will be released early in the fall semester. We warmly invite undergraduates, graduate students, and practitioner-researchers to:

1. **Watch for the CFP:** Details will be emailed through department email, posted on our website, and shared via social media. Please share with your students and encourage them to present.

2. **Submit Work:** Proposals highlighting innovative classroom practices, outstanding and extended course papers/projects, classroom/action research, creative projects, or emerging dissertation studies are welcome.

3. **Save the Date & Attend:** Even if students choose not to present, encourage them to mark their calendar to join us, celebrate their peers' work, and gather fresh ideas for their scholarship.

Let's continue building this vibrant community of inquiry. We look forward to seeing your students' proposals—and to welcoming you to the December 2025 fair!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?
Contact **Suzanne Porath**, *sporath@ksu.edu* or **Sherri Martinie**, *martinie@ksu.edu*