

# Stratenotes

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning • October 2014 • Volume 23, Issue 2

## SIM Impact Award: Brooklyn Junior High School

The 2014 International SIM Conference honored outstanding individuals who work with us at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning to improve education and learning experiences for students with learning disabilities. Here, we profile **Brooklyn Junior High School** in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, one of the recipients of the 2014 **SIM Impact Award**, which recognizes schools or school systems that have widely adopted many components of the Strategic Instruction Model™ and that have carefully gathered data related to their efforts. Meet the second recipient of the SIM Impact Award in the next issue of *Stratenotes*.

Julie Tollefson  
KUCRL

Commitment to the Strategic Instruction Model™ runs deep at Brooklyn Junior High School in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. The school, recipient of the 2014 SIM Impact Award, embraced SIM in 1987 and continues to build successful programs based on its interventions and instructional methods.

In the last few years, the school has renewed its focus on schoolwide literacy and the use of SIM to meet the needs of its highly mobile and diverse population. As part of this initiative, teachers embedded Content Enhancement Routines, the *Proficiency in Sentence Writing Strategy*, and Makes Sense Strategies in core curriculum. Intervention classes taught additional Learning Strategies as needed.

As a result, everyone—administrators, staff, and stu-

dents—are on the same page when it comes to instruction and learning.

“Students know what I mean when I ask them about the Frame, SLANT, inferences, or Unit Organizers and how it helps them learn,” says Kim Monette, principal. “I believe that is one of the most effective ‘litmus tests’ one can do as a leader: Talk to the students. Hear what they are saying.”

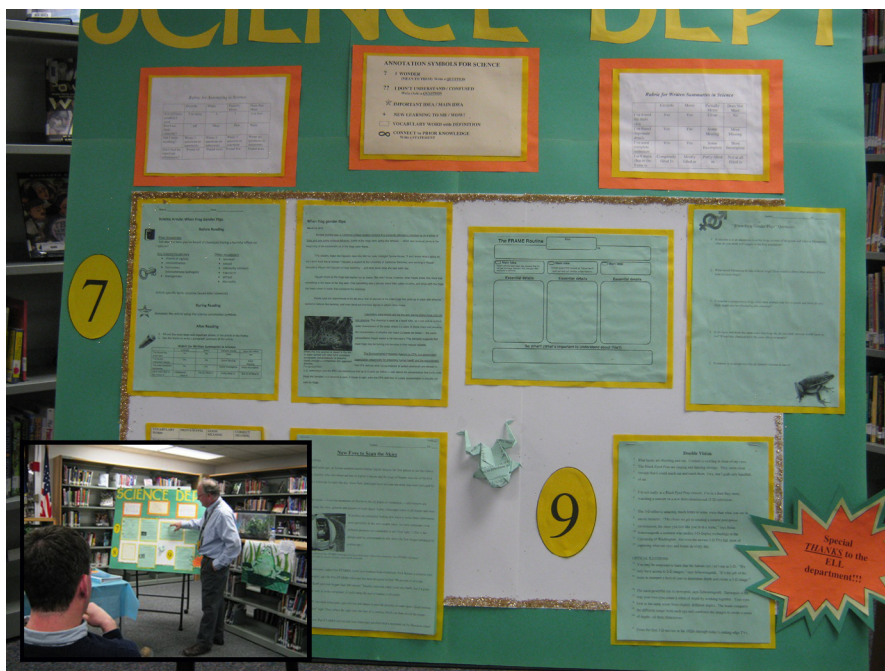
### SIM IN THE CLASSROOM

Examples of SIM abound in Brooklyn Junior High classrooms. Here are just a few of the many examples:

- The school’s English department (10 teachers) has used the *Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy* for more than 15 years. It is a whole-class strategy embedded in the curriculum, and teachers believe it is the most effective way to teach this skill.
- The English learner and special education departments (seven teachers total) teach *Fundamentals in the Sentence Writing Strategy*. The English learner department creates word walls—nouns in green and verbs in red—to help students begin to

### PRICE INCREASE

It’s been more than a decade since we last raised the prices of most of our SIM manuals. Alas, it’s time to do it again. New prices, effective immediately, are listed on the order form on pages 5–6.



## Brooklyn innovation: flipped classroom for Sentence Writing

One of the innovative practices undertaken by staff members at Brooklyn Junior High is the *Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy* flipped classroom initiative.

The school provided substitute teachers so that a special education teacher and seventh-grade English teacher could develop video versions of *Sentence Writing Strategy* lessons.

See them on Katie LaPointe's webpage on the Brooklyn Junior High website: <https://sites.google.com/a/apps.district279.org/lapointek/home/english-7>.

Students received packets of lessons and were encouraged to watch the videos over and over.

The blended, or flipped, classroom approach frees teachers to help individual students during class.

"It was quite impressive to go into her class and see all the knowledge these students have about writing," says Jones.

develop sentences quickly.

- Nine teachers in the special education, English learner, and reading and writing lab intervention courses use *Fundamentals of Paraphrasing and Summarizing* and the *Inference Strategy* in their courses.
- Science teachers use Unit Organizers for many of their units.
- English teachers have developed Unit Organizers related to Common Core State Standards and report that the devices have been especially helpful in teaching students academic language, such as "textual evidence."

The school has developed a variety of supports for teachers, including professional learning communities, which have been in place since 2006. Two literacy coaches help teachers embed SIM routines and strategies in their instruction. In addition, math and reading coaches teach at least two hours a day, keeping them tuned in to the classroom experience from a teacher's perspective.

"Our biggest challenges are time, time, and more time to have teachers collaborate, reflect on their work, and develop quality formative and summative assessments," says Janet Jones, literacy coach and reading teacher at the school.

### SHOW ME THE DATA

In addition to ensuring effective use of SIM interventions, teachers and administrators rely on data to guide their instructional decisions.

School staff identified teaching students how to find main ideas in informational text as a priority in the fall of 2010. Since then, staff members in English, social studies, science, music, technical education, and family and consumer science



use the FRAME as a literacy tool to help students capture main ideas and details while reading a variety of texts and organize their ideas for writing. Data collected during this period showed a marked increase in the number of students able to identify main ideas proficiently after instruction in the *Framing Routine*—a 36 percent increase in 2010–2011 and a 35 percent increase in 2011–2012.

From 2008 to 2011, the school steadily increased student proficiency and adequate yearly progress in reading and math, as indicated by Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in Reading results. Subsequent results indicate the school has made

significant progress in closing the achievement gap when comparing white students (25 percent of the student population) and students of color (75 percent). Significantly, Brooklyn Junior High made AYP in *all* categories.

In addition, to graduate from high school, Minnesota students are required to pass the Minnesota Comprehensive Writing Assessment. In 2013, 91 percent of the ninth-graders at Brooklyn Junior High School passed this test.

“The outcomes for students in Brooklyn Junior High are impressive, particularly given the diversity and, up until this year, high mobility rate of the student population,” says Patty

Graner, KUCRL director of professional development.

### LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Far from being satisfied with the outstanding results they’ve achieved so far, Brooklyn Junior High staff members continue to look for ways to improve instruction through SIM. In the future, teachers, coaches, and leaders within the school want to integrate *Unit Organizer* and *Course Organizer* routines, the SMARTER planning process, and standards-based grading and instruction practices across departments.

“SIM has a bright future at Brooklyn Junior High,” says Monette.

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STRATENOTES is published eight times from September through May and once every summer by the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning as part of Stratenotes for the International Professional Development Network. Publication period 2014–2015; cost \$50.00. Permission to reproduce any or all parts of Stratenotes to support professional development activities is hereby given.

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# REGISTER NOW: 2014–2015 SIM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Registration is open for the 2014–2015 SIM virtual conference. We have scheduled two opportunities for you to participate. Choose from one of the following dates:

- Winter Virtual Update: **Jan. 12–Feb. 8, 2015**, with a mandatory concluding webinar at 3 p.m. (Central) Feb. 11 or 10 a.m. (Central) Feb. 12. Registration deadline is Jan. 5, 2015.
- Spring Virtual Update: **April 13–May 10, 2014**, with a mandatory concluding webinar at 3 p.m. (Central) May 13 or 10 a.m. (Central) May 14. Registration deadline is April 6, 2015.

The webinars last about one hour.

Attendance at one of the webinars is mandatory to receive update credit, so **please do not sign up for a virtual update if you are not able to attend one of the webinars.**

## WHAT IS THE SIM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE?

The virtual conference is a way for you to receive credit for attending a SIM update without traveling to the international conference in Lawrence or one of the regional update conferences planned around the country. It does not replace face-to-face conferences, however. You may attend one virtual conference every four years, and you must attend at least one face-to-face conference between virtual conferences.

## WHO MAY ATTEND A SIM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE?

The virtual conference is open only to SIM Professional Developers who

have attended at least one face-to-face conference in the past. In addition, if you last attended a virtual conference, you must attend another face-to-face conference before registering for another virtual conference.

## HOW WILL THE SIM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE WORK?

The content of the SIM Virtual Conference will be available as online streaming videos of sessions presented during the 2014 International SIM Conference in July. The conference featured keynote speaker **Cynthia Coburn**, professor in the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University.

When the virtual conference begins, we will send you instructions for viewing the online videos as well as links to additional content, including handouts from the 2014 International SIM Conference, and instructions for completing the virtual conference. If you are unable to stream online videos, DVDs are available for an additional charge. If you choose the DVD option, we will send you additional information about your DVD choices.

You will be expected to watch videos of the keynote, five breakout sessions, and two general sessions (eight videos total), complete activities associated with each, and reflect on how you can use the information in your work. You must complete online evaluations and attend one of the mandatory concluding webinars before you receive credit for attending an update.

## DOES THIS FULFILL THE REQUIREMENT TO ATTEND AN UPDATE EVERY TWO YEARS TO REMAIN AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK?

Yes, the SIM virtual conference fulfills your update requirement. Remember, to be considered active in the SIM Network, you must attend an update every two years *and* maintain a current *Strateworks* membership.

## CAN I STOP ATTENDING FACE- TO-FACE CONFERENCES AND JUST COMPLETE MY UPDATES VIRTUALLY?

No. You may attend a virtual conference in lieu of a face-to-face conference every four years. In the interim, you must attend at least one face-to-face conference to maintain your active status within the network. In addition, you must have attended at least one face-to-face conference in the past before you can register for your first virtual conference.

## HOW MUCH DOES THE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE COST?

The cost is \$400 for the streaming video option or \$425 if you opt to receive DVDs of the sessions. You will not have the travel and lodging costs associated with attending a face-to-face conference. See the registration form on page 7.

# ORDER FORM

\*\*\*November 2014



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**\*Required to fill this order:** Name of Professional Developer(s)

**Required:** Workshop Date/Needed by:

Quantity	Title	Unit Price	Extension
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	<b>Listening &amp; Note-Taking</b> Strategy (New 2011)	\$20.00	
	<b>Paired</b> Associates Strategy: Instructor's Manual* (New 1996)	\$18.00	
	<b>Paragraph</b> Writing Strategy: Instructor's Manual* (Revised 1993)	\$26.00	
	<b>Paraphrasing</b> Strategy: Instructor's Manual* (Revised 1993)	\$18.00	
	<b>Proficiency</b> in Sentence Writing Strategy: Instr. Manual* (Revised '99)	\$24.00	
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<b>Content Enhancement Devices</b> (Graphics for SIM PDs) <b>CD</b>	\$10.00	
<b>Strategies Presentations</b> (for SIM Professional Developers) <b>CD</b>	\$10.00	
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**2014-2015 SIM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**  
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Email address to be used for communication about this conference: \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose your virtual conference session:**

- ☐ **Winter:** Jan. 12–Feb. 8, 2015; webinar dates Feb. 11 and Feb. 12 **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Jan. 5, 2015**  
☐ **Spring:** April 13–May 10, 2015; webinar dates May 13 and May 14 **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 6, 2015**

**AMOUNT ENCLOSED:**

- ☐ **Registration: Streaming video option** **\$400 (U.S. funds)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ **Registration: DVD option** **\$425 (U.S. funds)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ **Strateworks membership renewal (optional)** **\$50** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Refund Policy:** If you cannot participate in this conference, you must notify KUCRL by the following deadlines to receive a refund of your registration fee. **There will be a cancellation fee of \$25 for all cancellations.** We will be unable to issue refunds for cancellations received **after Jan. 5, 2015, for the virtual conference beginning Jan. 12, 2015, or after April 6, 2015, for the virtual conference beginning April 13, 2015.**

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# SIM CALENDAR

**November 13–14, 2014**

Northeast Region Update  
Conference for SIM Professional  
Developers  
The College of Saint Rose, Lally  
School of Education  
Albany, New York

**January 12–February 8, 2015**

Winter Virtual Update Conference  
for SIM Professional Developers  
Mandatory one-hour webinar  
February 11 or February 12

**January 27–29, 2015**

Florida Update Conference for  
SIM Professional Developers

**February 5–6, 2015**

West Region Update Conference  
for SIM Professional Developers  
Las Vegas

**March 10–11, 2015**

Southeast Update Conference for  
SIM Professional Developers  
Charleston, South Carolina

**April 13–May 10, 2015**

Spring Virtual Update Conference  
for SIM Professional Developers  
Mandatory one-hour webinar  
May 13 or May 14

**May 27–29, 2015**

SIM Learning Strategies for  
Preservice Educators  
Lawrence, Kansas

**May 27–29, 2015**

SIM Content Enhancement  
Routines for University Content  
and Preservice Educators  
Lawrence, Kansas

**June 25–26, 2015**

Maryland Update for SIM  
Professional Developers  
Elkton, Maryland

**July 15–17, 2015**

International SIM Conference  
Lawrence, Kansas

For a complete list of SIM events, including those not coordinated by KUCRL: **[HTTP://SIM.KUCRL.ORG/CLASSES](http://sim.kucrl.org/classes)**

**LIST YOUR OPEN SESSIONS ON THE SIM CALENDAR:** We are contacted by hundreds of educators each year who have heard about SIM or CLC and are looking for opportunities to learn more. Email information about your open sessions to [monatipton@ku.edu](mailto:monatipton@ku.edu) and be included on the online SIM Events Calendar.

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