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Education Partnership Names Director

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Selected News Releases

Education Partnership Names Director

ORONO, Maine – A regional partnership forged three years ago to improve K-12 teaching and learning has built a strong foundation and recently named a director to provide leadership for its ambitious agenda.

Nancy Yoder of Hampden, associate professor of educational leadership at the University of Maine, will devote half her workload to facilitating and coordinating activities of the Penobscot River Educational Partnership: A Professional Development Network.

PREP: PDN is comprised of seven school districts and the University of Maine, spearheaded by the College of Education and Human Development. Participating schools include Brewer, Bucksport, Old Town, Indian Island, SAD 22 (Hampden, Newburgh and Winterport), School Union 87 (Orono and Veazie), and School Union 90 (Alton, Bradley, Greenbush and Milford). The Partnership combines expertise and resources to link and strengthen all areas of teacher preparation and professional development, school-based research, technology, implementation of state academic standards and assessments, grant writing and other reform initiatives.

Yoder, whose experience and research includes the working of school/university partnerships and connections at the state and national levels, will lead PREP: PDN in developing long-range planning and a strategic plan, in addition to advancing its communications, collaborations and continuing progress.

“We are fortunate to someone with Yoder's background in the director's position,” says PREP: PDN Chair Thomas Perry, superintendent of School Union 87. “We have done some very good work over the past three years. The key to moving to a higher level is having someone who can provide the necessary support and coordination for continued growth.”

The experiences of the past three years has proved that the partnership has great potential, according to Robert Cobb, dean of the UMaine College of Education and Human Development. It also became clear that the full-time responsibilities of members didn't allow for the concentrated maintenance and leadership the active partnership needs on a daily basis. Yoder, with her thorough understanding of what partnerships need to function well and thrive, can provide that essential oversight, Cobb says. The College and PREP: PDN are sharing the cost of Yoder's half-time appointment as executive director.

Yoder is pleased to work with a group that has made such a strong start. “PREP:PDN has a sound organizational structure and talented, dedicated members,” she says. “I'm delighted to be working with them to strengthen the partnership.”

Yoder earned her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies: Anthropology, Philosophy and Education from Emory University. She joined the UMaine Educational Leadership faculty last year, coming from the Institute for Educational Renewal at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio), where she worked on planning, implementing and assessing collaborative school-university partnership activities, professional development and inquiry projects. Her major research interests are school-university partnerships and the connections between schooling and culture.

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