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Xenia Students Benefit from New Education Approach

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – Through a new collaborative educational partnership with the Xenia community, Cedarville University is changing the way it prepares future teachers. And the immediate benefactor is Xenia City Schools.

The new teacher education program places teacher candidates and university professors in Xenia classrooms at the same time, allowing students to deepen their teaching skills, while also taking college courses. The program also assigns student teachers to elementary, middle and high schools for their field experience, while receiving college instruction at the same time.

This model of training tomorrow's teachers replaces the more traditional teacher education system that didn't integrate classroom instruction with field experience.

"Our partnership with Xenia Community Schools is unique because it combines theoretical instruction with authentic teacher experiences throughout our curriculum," said Jeremy Ervin, Ph.D., dean of Cedarville University's School of Education. "By combining these elements in the 'teacher education laboratory,' our candidates receive a more active learning experience that will set them apart from other beginning teachers."

Xenia City School's leadership team agrees with Ervin's assessment.

"We have seen an increase in student learning and on-task behaviors as a result of our partnership with Cedarville University," said Garry Hawes, principal of McKinley Elementary. "We are energized by the opportunity to innovate with our university partners."

Cheyenne Lubben, a junior special education and early education major from Holland, Michigan, has already seen the benefits of this partnership during her time in the classroom at McKinley Elementary in Xenia.

"We're able to take what we learn and actually apply it in the classroom," Lubben said. "And what we're learning helps us to be used more effectively in the schools."

Cedarville's school of education is currently in the first phase of implementing the partnership. It hopes to fully implement the initiative within three years, and principals at Xenia's partner schools are highly supportive of the effort.

Ervin believes all students benefit from this partnership. He says Cedarville's teacher candidates gain real-world experience through learning in a classroom setting, and Xenia schools benefit from having the energy and manpower of teacher candidates to help meet the needs of their students and mentor teachers. He is eager to see the program continue to grow and develop more highly equipped teachers.

"While we already produce top teacher candidates who make a noticeable impact in classrooms during their first year, this is only going to make them better," Ervin said. "The future teachers in this program will have the ability to impact communities more than ever before."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in

1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings.

For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.