The fourth year of the STEP/Sunnyvale School District summer program of 2013 held at Bishop Elementary School in Sunnyvale was a successful partnership. The planning for the summer school began in October of 2012 when both partners agreed to continue the relationship. The district administrative team and the STEP summer team reviewed the successes of the previous summer and enhanced the 2013 program. STEP and Sunnyvale co-interviewed summer school teachers and selected eleven teachers committed to teaching students as well as mentoring STEP's beginning teachers. In addition, the curriculum for summer continued to be enhanced with an oral language component and a strong emphasis on Mathematics. The summer school principal Stephanie Fischer and STEP Clinical Associate Dey Rose provided the teachers with oral language development and mathematics problem solving strategies prior to the start of summer school. This mutual collaboration and professional development continued throughout summer school and was an excellent model for the STEP teacher candidates to learn about how a district and university work together to support student learning.

Goals for the STEP/Sunnyvale District Summer Program

About 290 students entering grades 1-5, 11 cooperating teachers, and 23 STEP teacher candidates participated in the joint STEP-Sunnyvale summer program.

The goals for the elementary school students were: to develop students’ confidence in themselves as learners; to improve literacy and numeracy skill; to strengthen problem solving and critical thinking skills; to provide opportunity for students to experience a variety of instructional strategies; to provide multiple opportunities for students to read (literature, poems, plays) write, speak, sing, dance and solve problems.

The goals for the STEP teacher candidates were: to observe ways to develop classroom community; to get to know and to work closely with elementary school students and teachers; to collaborate with experienced teachers and begin learning how to address the California Standards for the Teaching Profession; to document and assess students’ growth and development in literacy and numeracy.

Structure of the Summer School

The Sunnyvale/STEP Summer School at Bishop Elementary School was organized into two blocks:

1 – A concentrated focus on literacy development, including oral language
The focus of the summer program was to foster a love of learning by developing students’ confidence in themselves as learners. Students strengthened their problem solving and critical thinking skills through a focused curriculum in literacy, math, oral language development and performing arts. The summer program began classes on Monday, July 1 and concluded on Friday, July 26th. Classes met Monday – Friday from 8:00am-12:15 pm. STEP teacher candidates planned before school from 7:45-8:00 am on Thursday afternoons from 12:30-2:30 with their cooperating teachers.

Role of the STEP Teacher Candidates during Summer School

All Bishop students had two large blocks of class time each day focusing on literacy, numeracy and oral language development. Two STEP candidates were assigned to a teacher for both blocks. The STEP candidates were expected to help with supervisory duties during snack/ break time from 10:00 to 10:30 am. Specific duties were assigned by Stephanie Fischer, Principal at Bishop Elementary School. The time schedule for the summer program was:

- Teachers arrived at school at 7:45
- Prep Time/Yard Duty 7:45-8:00
- Block A: 8:00-10:00
- Brunch: 10:00-10:30
- Block B: 10:30-12:15

During the summer program teacher candidates contributed to student growth and development by:

- working intensively with individuals and small groups of students.
- focusing on literacy, math, and oral language strategies.
- getting to know their students as individuals.
- supporting the cooperating teacher in planning, implementing, and assessing learning.
- reflecting together with the cooperating teacher.

There were opportunities for the STEP students to observe or visit other special classrooms or programs during their time at summer school. STEP candidates were assigned classrooms to visit during the first two weeks of summer school. This provided the teachers advance notice of the observations and balanced the number of teacher candidates visiting classrooms.

The STEP students learned about the district literacy assessment from their cooperating teacher, district literacy specialists, as well as, from their university literacy professor. They supported the classroom teacher with assessing the students.

Role of the Cooperating Teachers during Summer School

Two STEP candidates were assigned to a given class with one class being assigned three teacher candidates. Daily experiences in the classroom, debriefs and Thursday planning sessions provided many of them with their first experiences as teachers.
Cooperating teachers supported the growth and development of teacher candidates by:

- Made their thinking visible. Many included the teacher candidates in daily conversations about goals for students, lesson plans & activities, and debrief to assess how the class was progressing.
- Provided timely and specific feedback to the teacher candidates.
- Included the teacher candidates on several mornings as weekly plans and goals were discussed and crafted.
- Modeled effective teaching strategies and positive interactions with students.
- Examined student work together and working as a team in providing oral and written feedback to the students.

The STEP Director of Clinical Work, Ruth Ann Costanzo, and the summer school clinical associates, Dey Rose and Laura Hill Bonnet, met with the cooperating teachers four times during the four week program to debrief their experience, support the cooperating teachers in providing graduated responsibilities to the STEP students, provide mentoring support, as well as, for the cooperating teachers to provide STEP with feedback about the STEP teacher candidates and the program. In addition, the STEP staff checked in weekly with the principal, Stephanie Fischer who also attended the Cooperating Teachers meetings. Dey Rose and Laura Hill Bonnet were also on campus during the week to help support both the teacher candidates and cooperating teachers.

Assessment of the STEP Teacher Candidates and the Summer Program

STEP teacher candidates benefited from frequent feedback on their performances. Cooperating teachers, STEP staff and peers observed interactions in the classrooms and debriefed with STEP teacher candidates on a routine basis. At the end of summer school, cooperating teachers were asked to complete an Assessment of Field Placement Experience and Participation for each student teacher. This assessment served as documentation for student teachers’ clinical placement for the summer quarter and was organized around the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. It emphasized conceptions of teaching and learning that underlie the pedagogical stance of STEP. Teacher candidates also filled out a self-assessment using the same document. In addition to the self-assessment the candidates were asked to provide feedback about their perception of the summer school experience.

Summary of the STEP 2013 Teacher Candidate Exit Surveys:

Eighty eight percent of the STEP candidates said they got to observe ways to develop classroom community either very well (4) or extremely well (5) on a scale of 1-5. One hundred percent said they got to work closely with elementary students and teachers, 86% were able to build connection between theory and practice and 82% said they had an opportunity to collaborate with experienced teachers. When asked to what extent they had contributed to student academic growth and development by working with individuals and small groups of students, 86% said they did and 82% felt they had an opportunity to contribute to student social/interpersonal growth. Only 68% felt they had the opportunity to contribute to student growth and development by supporting the classroom teacher through observing ways to develop classroom community and only 68% felt observing classrooms other than their own were useful.
The following recommendations were given by the summer school teachers and/or the teacher candidates after the 2012 summer school to strengthen the program. All four of the recommendations were followed:

1. Continue the four week summer program.
2. Review the literacy curriculum.
3. Redesign the assessment tools for summer school.
4. Recruit regular classroom teachers as summer school substitute teachers.

Recommendations for the Summer School Program 2014:

1. Identify ways to make the planning time more effective
2. Rethink the purpose of summer school observations.
3. Revisit assessment tools for students.
4. Provide more PE equipment during the brunch break.
5. Redesign the STEP Assessment of Field Experience and Participation.
6. Continue the weekly cooperating teacher mentoring meetings to better support the teacher candidates and cooperating teachers understanding of graduated responsibility in summer school.

The partnership between STEP and the Sunnyvale School District continues to be an excellent model of collaboration between a district and university. We are grateful for the commitment and support of the administration, the teachers and staff.

The leadership of Mala Ahuja and Stephanie Fischer during the planning and implementation of the summer school program was outstanding. Weekly debrief meetings helped the program run smoothly. Dey Rose, the STEP coordinator of the STEP elementary summer school and clinical associate Laura Hill-Bonnet supported the teacher candidates, cooperating teachers as well as the principal whenever an issue arose.

We look forward to Summer 2014!
APPENDIX A

1. To what extent were you able to meet the goals for the STEP/Sunnyvale Summer School experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>1 – Not at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 – Extremely well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To observe ways to develop classroom community</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>40.91%</td>
<td>40.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get to know and to work closely with elementary school students and teachers</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>90.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To collaborate with experienced teachers</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>31.82%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build connections between theory and practice and/or make connections between coursework and field placements</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>13.64%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>59.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Another goal of the STEP/Sunnyvale Summer School experience was to give you the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in classrooms other than your own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How useful were these observations?</th>
<th>1 – Not at all useful</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 – Extremely useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>40.91%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. To what extent did you have the opportunity to contribute to the following by working with individuals and small groups of students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>1 – Not at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 – To a large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student academic growth and development?</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>13.64%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student social/interpersonal growth and development?</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>13.64%</td>
<td>45.45%</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. To what extent did you have the opportunity to contribute to student growth and development by supporting the cooperating teacher in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 – Not at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 – To a large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To observe ways to develop classroom community</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>63.64%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get to know and to work closely with elementary school</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students and teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To collaborate with experienced teachers</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. To what extent did you have the opportunity to contribute to student growth and development by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 – Not at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 – To a large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reflecting with members of your teaching team?</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>22.73%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>54.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What were some of the highlights of the STEP/Sunnyvale Summer School for you?

**Selected responses below.**

I really valued the community that was built within the STEP elementary cohort and within my carpool group. End of summer performance where we got to appreciate other grades and share what we had worked on with the whole school. Learning how to do assessments like reading fluency (learned this from Stephanie and Claudia).

The structured lessons we planned and executed for BLIS and QR&M were both highlights. The weekly planning meetings with our CT were very useful. The math interviews were fascinating and useful.

Experiencing practice and theory and how they inform each other!

Working with my CT, getting to know the students, and leading some small groups

Summer is school was a really hands on experience. I loved working with the students and testing out what we were learning in class in my two main lessons. Being in the classroom every day and taking
on leadership roles in the classroom was very impactful and the community was extremely supportive.

Seeing how community norms and class management are developed in the classroom; observing and analyzing student thinking and reasoning

Being in a classroom with another STEPie: to talk about our class, to brainstorm ideas, to observe each other, to support each other. Videotaping my teaching and reflecting on the videos. Building relationships with students. Our fantastic summer school courses! The way that our courses interacted with placement and encouraged reflection. Observing other classrooms. Seeing a teacher begin with a new group of students. Having time to observe a teacher teaching. Seeing the way one elementary school interacts (physical spaces, movement of kids, etc). The way my teacher was able to explain her thinking to us STEPies. Being able to try teaching lessons and make mistakes.

I really enjoyed working with and learning from my CT. She always included us in her thought process and often asked for our input. The amount of community building in our class was amazing, and I also really enjoyed observing my CT's classroom management strategies. Our CT also gave us the change to plan and implement our own lessons, including a full week of small reading group lessons, as well as PE, read-alouds, and number talks.

I enjoyed having the opportunity to watch a master teacher at work. I LOVED getting to know the students and having the opportunity to build a working relationship with them.

Our CT was absolutely amazing - open to fresh ideas, constantly reflective, always appreciative of her students, highly knowledgeable about the academic expectations for the program and grade level. I felt so fortunate to be able to work with her and to learn from her example.

My CT/STEP team - it was a really positive, reflective group that I loved working with!

Strong and open communication with my CT, co-STEPpee, and STEP faculty. Whenever I had questions or observations from placement, I was able to bounce them off of experienced people and learn!

Getting to apply the knowledge I gained from my classes at Stanford with my students and observing their results.

Diane was an excellent CT. She always explained her thinking to us and provided several resources to us, such as a list of attention getting techniques.

The highlight was working with the students and the opportunity to try out what we were learning by planning and implementing lessons for our students. I also felt that our STEP classes were well-suited to what we were doing in summer school, and helped provide a framework for the experience.

Getting to be with another STEPie during summer school was very helpful and getting to make connections with the students.
Observing teachers collaborate and work as a team to serve the needs of all students.

I liked how we began our placements almost immediately after the start of the program. My CT was very transparent in her methods, and extremely accommodating in allowing me to administer segments of the curriculum. It was valuable to have the ability to communicate and build relationships with the kids during snack and recess time, and to be able to observe social and academic interactions in the classroom. I had the chance to work one on one with a student with a learning disability, and this helped to develop my perspective.

7. What were some of the challenges?

(Selected responses below.)

Not enough daily time to debrief with CT (but weekly meetings were great)

Making sure the students were on task, and having such a limited time to work with CT and students. (4 weeks went by so fast!)

My CT's style did not always align with the STEP philosophy. Our classroom was tracked so I only experienced a small range of ability levels for students. F & P testing was subjective and took away from valuable learning time. Both math and word sort lessons were crammed into the last few days of school.

In the last week of school, it was difficult to balance our STEP coursework requirements (multiple small group videos) with Fountas and Pinnell assessments and other school wrap-up activities.

As will be a challenge in teaching in any school that must meet expected assessment criteria, I found it difficult to support our daily multiplication fact practice and cold fluency passage readings when I felt the emphasized skills could have been supported in more developmentally relevant ways. I was however, able to learn valuable lessons on how to make assessment expectations more relevant for my classes of students!

Working with the district's assessments (ie/fluency passages)

I was a bit slow to begin leading activities because I didn't want to step on my CTs toes. In retrospect I'm sure she wouldn't have minded if I'd asked to begin earlier.

Classroom management was a challenge for me. The class was mostly made up of boys who were very rowdy. It was a very good opportunity for me to practice behavior management but it certainly did not always go well.

Feeling unprepared for some of the racial and socioeconomic topics that came up.
I was given the opportunity to implement elements of the literacy curriculum in small groups, but had minimal training or indication that I was executing it correctly. Often, the instructional and classroom management strategies of my CT would stand in opposition to the content I was learning in my STEP classes.

8. **What suggestions for improvement do you have for us?**

(Selected responses below.)

I think the more direct connections we have between the placement and our courses the better. The specific observations for courses where we had a procedure to practice and reflect on or an assignment to carry out in the classroom felt more useful than weekly observations that were only generally structured and that we never referred to in coursework outside of placement.

Breaking apart the one two-hour planning meeting into two hour-long sessions

I would have loved to teach either the math or word sort lesson earlier in the 4 weeks because we gathered so much data but were not able to follow up on our lessons or let our CT use what we learned to plan other lessons. I very much enjoyed observing other classrooms and would have liked more time to observe in other classrooms.

Make it very clear to the CT’s that Stepies are coming to summer school with a range of experiences and comfort levels. They should understand that some of might want to do more observing than others, and that is perfectly acceptable. It also would be really helpful to stress that the two Stepies in the same class should not feel like they have to do the same amount of observing or teaching as each other. Each should take on more responsibilities as he/she feels comfortable regardless of what the other one is doing.

I really enjoyed the opportunity to observe in other classrooms. Maybe there could be a more structured way for us to ask questions to the CTs/TCs in those classrooms in order to wrap-up and reflect on those visits?

We were confused for a while because we were told at the beginning of summer that this was a chance for us to observe and work with individual students or small groups, but our CT said that at her meeting, the STEPies who were praised were the ones who taught whole-class activities and went above and beyond in that way. I feel like we were getting mixed messages throughout the Summer, and we weren’t really sure what we were supposed to be doing.

Nothing. I thought the summer was very successful for me, given the time crunch and work load.

I can’t think of any. Overall, it was a positive experience and a great way to get involved immediately in the classroom. And, it was a great way to get to know my fellow STEP-ies!
I think the CTs were not always 100% sure about how much responsibility we should be taking on in the classroom. They received some mixed messages from the program and from us. It did not get in the way of me learning anything but would've helped reduce the stress a bit if we all were on the same page.

Include a three-way meeting with a supervisor, CT, and step student during the summer.

9. Additional comments?

(Selected responses below.)

Thanks for asking!

In our classroom there were three STEP students with one CT and that ratio was great.

Summer school was great. Thank you!

Thank you for your help in organizing everything for us this summer!