and had been so impressed that he traveled to small town Georgia to meet with our facilitator. He said that it was encouraging to see the introductions of CFGs across our organization was a key to the success of our teachers and community. He also admitted that the empowerment of teachers could be scary for administrators, but he said he was willing to give it a try.

On that note, we started our CFG training with a cross-division group from the two campuses. As in any overseas setting, we had a wide variety of teachers in terms of experience, language, culture, and roles. Over those initial three days, what we came to call “The October Cohort” grew to understand CFG protocols as key in building relationships that foster trust and support among teachers. Everyone in the group left feeling the warmth of their SAS community and the potential that CFG could create networks around the school and in their professional lives. Those of us who had undertaken the training started our own CFGs in our divisions and teams, and found that, slowly, administrators were beginning to understand the power of the protocols that were being used in these groups. Though the groups represented a small number of our faculty, the administration persisted with more training workshops and kept bringing Frances from Georgia to keep the CFG ball rolling. Mid-year, our cohort completed its training and by the June of 2007, we had CFGs and therigor of adjusting to a new and challenging transition. Most importantly, these mentor groups had been supported by the administration to incorporate CFG protocols into the day to day running of the school. When the new teachers arrived in August, for example, they were divided into groups of 8-10, each with a CFG trained leader. These “mentor groups” had regular meetings throughout the orientation process, and at each meeting the leaders used the protocols to help move new people through important school wide documents, have text discussions, and provide practical support for transition. Most importantly, these mentor groups provided a friendly place to go when dealing with the rigor of adjusting to a new and challenging work environment. Participants were known to put aside other meetings and push past first (continued on page 17).

The great success of the June cohort was that Chinese teachers numbered more than half of the group. Here, I had the chance to see part of the Chinese language and cultural barriers that often separate expat and host country teachers. As facilitators and participants, we were thrilled to spend the week learning so much about the Chinese language program, their professional dilemmas, teaching and assessment strategies, and their lives as the host country teachers in an American school. The power of the protocols and their systematic inclusion all participants provided us with a view of the Chinese teacher’s professional lives that we would not be exposed to in other contexts; we got to see what their lives as teachers in this large American organization was really like. The week ended with feelings of elation, possibility, and cross-cultural connections as we said our goodbyes for the summer.

A less obvious change, but one that I think has far reaching potential, has been an increased effort by the administration to incorporate CFG protocols into the day to day running of the school. When the new teachers arrived in August, for example, they were divided into groups of 8-10, each with a CFG trained leader. These “mentor groups” had regular meetings throughout the orientation process, and at each meeting the leaders used the protocols to help move new people through important school wide documents, have text discussions, and provide practical support for transition. Most importantly, these mentor groups provided a friendly place to go when dealing with the rigor of adjusting to a new and challenging work environment. Participants were known to put aside other meetings and push past first (continued on page 17).
In This Issue
Debbie Bambino, Pennsylvania

Here at Connections, we are going to press as we prepare for the close of another school year, turn our thoughts to the design of summer institutes, and yet another new beginning in the fall. In this issue, Steven Strull and Peggy Silva invite us to eavesdrop on their ongoing conversation about Center of Activity membership in the Director’s Report. Mary Hastings interviews Camilla Greene for NSRF’s Living History. We learn from Julie Lindsay about efforts to embed CFG practices at the Shanghai American School and Debbie Bambino gives us a glimpse of the ongoing work of our Pennsylvania Center of Activity.

Susan Schoeller reviews Still Separate and Unequal: Segregation and the Future of Urban School Reform and the author’s documentation of the failure of the possibility that was Brown vs. Board of Education. Camilla Greene shares her review of The Warrior Method: A Parents’ Guide to Rearing Healthy Black Boys, and wonders why educators seem more concerned with subduing rather than empowering their black, male students.

A student shares her experience visiting her mother in prison in our Students at the Center piece, and Greg Peters asks us to think together about how much we know of our students’ lives after the last period of the day.

Ross Peterson-Veatch sums up our recent Research Forum and invites all of us to take our place as participants on this journey of educative action research and Roselia Holman writes about intentionally deeper into issues of equity by adapting the basic Chalk Talk into the Triple Chalk Talk in Protocols in Practice.

Finally, we offer a summation of the Winter Meeting experience in Tampa. We hope that this issue of Connections serves you well in your own learning communities and in your summer initiatives in new locales. Let us know about your use of the journal and your needs for coverage in the future. As always, we welcome new and returning writers. ■

Please contact Debbie Bambino at dbambino@earthlink.net with your feedback, ideas for future articles, and/or your interest in writing for Connections.

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Protocols in Practice
(continued from page 18)

was the question “What is equity?” I had to ask in our debrief—how is it that “equity” is placed at the end, remotely hanging away from the other questions, as an afterthought? Is it coincidence, or is it symbolic of how equity itself is usually attended to? After the other definitions were unpacked, equity was tacked on to the tail end of our days or added as a secondary or lesser component of our agendas. It is the topic we think we should discuss, but because we feel less competent addressing it, because of the messiness, difficulty, and lack of confidence that we sometimes feel when holding space for this volatile dialogue, it goes at the very end, sometimes in the hope that time will not allow us to get to it. That needed to change, and so I changed it. Taking a strategic and more proactive approach, sometimes I will place it as the middle question, and at other times I reserve changing its location until later in the week to emphasize or punctuate the importance of equity as the missing puzzle piece that can move us from “too much schooling, too little education” (See Too Much Schooling, Too Little Education: A Paradox of Black Life in White Societies by Mwalimu J. Shujaa) to what is required to meet the needs of each student in order to improve academic achievement.

Therefore, the sequence of questioning toward the end of the seminar (and hopefully, participants arrive at this conclusion themselves) becomes: if we operate from the premise that schools are designed to “teach” students (see: The Historic Timeline of Public Education; www.aahen.com) and we truly embrace equity, then it is our responsibility and hopefully our passion to create the conditions and circumstances in our educational environments to give each student what he/she needs by providing the essential and crucial inputs…ie equity in human, capital and financial resources needed to teach them well, empower them and liberate them so that they can achieve at high levels. If we choose to, we can truly educate them and enable them to make positive contributions to our local, national and global communities. In Teaching to Transgress, bell hooks says that education is the practice of freedom. How else can we become a truly democratic society?

The Warrior Method
(continued from page 8)

parenting raises black boys the same way white boys are raised. Gray parenting challenges institutions regarding the treatment of black boys. Black parenting sees systems as inherently out of touch with black boys’ life goals. There are many useful and many far-too-familiar statistics on black boys throughout the book. The statistic that was new to me is that the only age at which a black male statistically outperforms a white male is after age 85. If a black male lives to be 85, he will statistically outlive his white counterpart.

Dr. Winbush challenges any adult wanting to nourish and successfully engage black boys to know and practice the 4 C’s: Consciousness, Commitment, Cooperation, and Community. The book includes an annotated bibliography of books for black boys grades 1-6 and 7-12 that I recommend: The Warrior Method to anyone, whether he or she be a parent, grandparent, educator or concerned citizen, who wants to read a thoughtful guide to developing the fullest capacity of each black boy.

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Still Separate and Unequal
(continued from page 7)

me more convinced than ever that this is critical work for us to do.

Second, after arguing so strongly that integrated schools are essential, Gold offers very little about how we should get there. He discusses a few possibilities, then asserts that “an approach that can succeed … is small-scale voluntary integration of schools in working- and middle-class suburbs near cities.” I wish I thought that were realistic, but I don’t. So for me, the mandate of this book is to pick up where Gold leaves off. He’s stated the problem well, but offers no easy answers. Where do we go from there is up to us. ■

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Winter Meeting Wrap-up
Sarah Childers, Indiana

Protocols in Practice: Triple Chalk Talk
Rosalie Holman, North Carolina

NSRF’s Living History: An Interview with Camilla Greene
Mary Hastings, Maine

Center of Activity Report: Pennsylvania
Debbie Bambino, Pennsylvania

Still Separate and Unequal: Segregation and the Future of Urban School Reform
Book Review by Susan Schoeller, Indiana

The Warrior Method: A Parents’ Guide to Rearing Healthy Black Boys
Book Review by Camilla Greene, Pennsylvania

Research Forum Report
Ross Peterson-Veatch, Indiana

Invte, Include, Inspire
Scott Hutchinson, Indiana

Students at the Center: Sunday Morning
Zoe W., California

CFGs in Shanghai
Julie Lindsay, China

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If you have any feedback or are interested in contributing to Connections, contact us at 812.330.2702 or dbambino@earthlink.net.

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