



GVSU Vice President for Planning and Equity Patricia Oldt, left, visits with Jerry Victor during the School of Education's Student Information & Services Center open house.

STUDENT INFORMATION & SERVICES CENTER DEDICATED

Grand Valley State University officially dedicated the School of Education's newly created Student Information & Services Center with a Nov. 6 ribbon cutting ceremony featuring President Mark Murray.

The Student Information & Services Center — located on the first floor of the Eberhard Center at GVSU's downtown campus — opened for the fall 2002 semester and features a staff of 12 providing assistance with registration, admissions, audits, placement, advising and certification.

CONVOCATION SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER GRADUATES

Convocation for December 2002 Education graduates is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 6 at the Grand Valley State University Field House.

For the first time, graduate students will be incorporated into the ceremony. Those students will wear light blue cords to signify to the university that they are Education graduates.

Receiving honors for Teacher of the Year is Carol Kroon, a kindergarten teacher at C.A. Frost Elementary, while Reggie Flenory, Principal at Linden Academy, will be honored as Administrator of the Year.

ON THE COVER Interim Dean Anne Mulder, Ph.D., center, has the School of Education looking toward the future with a newly implemented restructuring of the division. GVSU President Mark Murray, top, participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the School of Education's Student Information & Services Center with director Jacqueline Melin, left, Dean Mulder and Board of Trustees member Donna Brooks. Staff members of Jefferson Elementary School, bottom, enjoy a moment with children's author Tom Woodruff (forefront) during the 2002 Celebrate Literacy Conference. The School of Education has provided Jefferson Elementary with a school visit by the popular children's author.

ANNE MULDER, Ph.D. DEAN'S CORNER



IMPLEMENTING CHANGE TOWARD MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY

In our rapidly changing world, no organization can escape the need to be about the task of constantly assessing how they are accomplishing their work. This is as true for a School of Education (SOE) as it is for the university as a whole, for corporations, or for governmental entities. To assuage this concern, the SOE has begun the process of strategic planning, keeping in mind the university's strategic planning initiative as well.

Last year, this effort resulted in new mission, vision, and values statements; a professional advisory council that provided input regarding our programs and services to our constituency; and a restructuring of the service and academic units within the School itself. These efforts have involved literally everyone within the school. What is most important is that these efforts are ongoing.

We have come to understand that we are indeed a work in progress and that change requires our being able to adapt to multiple challenges, both internally and externally. A clear framework will help us respond more efficiently to the students and the community we serve. I am pleased to share the new statements of purpose with you:

Mission: *We develop exceptional educators to lead and serve in local and world communities.*

Values: *We are a community of learners who value:*

*Excellence and equity in all we do;
Teaching, learning, and leading through critical inquiry, innovation, scholarship, and professional accountability;*

*Collaborative endeavors within the university and in the many communities we serve;
Participatory decision-making and relationships which foster an ethical, compassionate, and collegial atmosphere.*

Vision: *We envision our future as a recognized, pro-active educational community with the skills and resources to transform educators and educational practices, which thereby promotes effective systemic change. We see this as a professional and personal journey that nurtures the human spirit and inspires the lives of those we serve.*

This framework, as simple as it may seem, requires much of us as a School of Education. We have to continually assess how well we are communicating our vision within the organization, to the university community, to our students, and to the larger community we serve. We have to address our role as educators, determining how we teach, how we engage in research, and how well we collaborate with our colleagues at every level.

We also have to acknowledge our responsibility to be accountable to a variety of entities, including state and federal government, accred-

iting agencies, the university, and most of all, the students we teach and the schools they serve. It is an awesome task, to be sure.

Our first task has been to restructure our School of Education into three service units and three academic units. Academic Services assists the SOE in matters of accreditation, state approvals and policies and procedures within the unit and throughout the university. Community Outreach is a collaborative venture with the Office of Continuing Education and provides outreach for all programs, credit and non-credit, offered at or through distance education, workshops and conferences, or alumni efforts. The Student Information and Services Center provides "one stop shopping" for teacher candidates and for those teachers already in the field. Located on the first floor of the Eberhard Center, this Center's staff handles admission into the undergraduate and graduate programs, advising and informational services, field placement, and certification and endorsement information and requirements.

Desiring a more holistic approach to teaching and learning, the SOE created three academic units, vertically integrating graduate and undergraduate programs. Curriculum and Instruction faculty come from Early Childhood; Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Adult Education; Special Education; Reading; and the Graduate Teacher Certification program. Many field-based supervisors call this area home as well. The Foundations and Technology faculty cover programs and courses in Educational Psychology, Research and Measurement, Current Issues, and Educational Technology. Leadership and Human Services include Special Education Administration, Educational Leadership, College Student Affairs Leadership, and the proposed new program area in School Counseling. This new configuration provides an opportunity for more systematic program review, varied teaching assignments, and additional scholarship and research opportunities for faculty and students.

On a personal note, it seems to me that what we have done is to provide increased opportunities for creating a community of learners with a shared vision of a future they are constantly building. This community of learners is comprised of teachers and students from every level, university administrators and school superintendents, children and adults. As we define and communicate our vision and as we create systems that support and guide our mission and express our values, we can truly be about the business of developing educators who make a difference in a world we are still defining.

(Anne Mulder, Ph.D., is the Interim Dean of GVSU's School of Education. She may be accessed via e-mail at muldera@gvsu.edu).