

The Evolution of a Learning Community for Elementary Education Majors

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Abstract

Concerns about the quality of math and science education in the elementary grades often focus on the shortage of well qualified teachers at that level, a shortage that reflects both a lack of interest among prospective teachers in teaching mathematics and science (Committee on Science, 2007), and the need for solid preparation in mathematics for elementary education majors (Ma, 1999). Since elementary level teachers are responsible for teaching their students all subjects, they routinely integrate subjects and teach "across the curriculum." But many elementary teachers slight their students' math and science education because they are uncomfortable and unfamiliar with math and science topics, a shortcoming that can be lessened through inquiry-based science courses for pre-service teachers (Weld & Funk, 2005).