



Dr. Sherry Willis shares the text that includes her research—Chapter #11!

Southwest Principal's Research Published in Text

Little did Dr. Sherry Willis realize that when she defended her dissertation at Western Carolina University, that she would receive a request for her writing to be included as an entire chapter in a teacher's instructional text.

But sure enough, that's exactly what happened. Willis, who is principal of Southwest Elementary School, earned her doctorate in educational leadership during 2010, defending her dissertation in June. The next month, Dr. Willis received a phone call from the chair of the dissertation committee inquiring if she would permit her dissertation to be used as Chapter 11 in an upcoming publication: *Teacher Leadership, The "New" Foundations of*

Teacher Education, edited by Dr. E. B. Hilty. It was Dr. Hilty on the other end of the phone.

Dr. Hilty believed that the research and data presented by Dr. Willis was exactly what was needed for Chapter #11—providing new information for a focus on the elementary level.

“As a member of the North Carolina Kindergarten Think Tank—I’ve had the opportunity to conduct interviews and research with instructors from all over the state,” said Willis. “There are 36 in all (with 280 who applied)—and while I’ve interviewed them, I also instructed leadership skills during quarterly and week-long summer institutes. It’s a very in-depth program—with the beneficial exchange concentrating on the elementary level of education. I never imagined that my research and professional experiences would expand to instructional use for a college text.”

As a textbook that can be used for both undergraduate and graduate level instruction, the book was published during the summer of 2011 and is now actively part of the curriculum at Western Carolina University. The text can be found on Amazon.com and the preview includes excerpts from the chapter authored by Dr. Willis.

“I thought my secret dream would be to author a children’s book—but I never dreamed to be published at this level,” said Dr. Willis.

Dr. Willis has served Southwest Elementary as their principal since 1998 and this is her 37th year in education.

Congratulations Dr. Willis!