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the whole school.

"This evolved from Dr. Manner helping a principal to ECU adopting a school," Mrs. Lilley said. ECU's Rural Education Department leader Nancy Davis became involved and is helping fund the project.

All Harkers Island teachers and teacher assistants traveled to Greenville last month to begin the first day of work. The morning was spent learning more about curriculum mapping and touring the University's Teacher Resource Center.

Through this partnership, Harkers Island teachers and assistants can check out teacher resource materials from the library. The island staff also has access to all the equipment in the ECU teacher workroom — time-saving items such as laminators, equipment to make math manipulatives, templates for making maps and more. The center also has loan copies of all award-winning children's books and copies of big books.

"This partnership has basically established an extension of our teacher resource media center," Mrs. Lilley said. "We can call or go online and access or check out materials. This gives us resources for staff development and also resources for our students."

She noted that ECU then mails those materials to the school or Miss Lilley and Allison Smith, daughter of teacher Cecilia Smith, pick up the materials and take them to the island school.

In addition, ECU has provided a space for the Harkers Island Elementary School project on its Web site and there the professor has posted links to other important sites and professional articles that relate to curriculum mapping.

For first grade teacher Laura Styron, the partnership with ECU is exciting, and she is already seeing the benefits of curriculum mapping.

"Finding time to plan ahead is one of the most difficult things in the elementary grades because young children do not work independently," Mrs. Styron said. "We are now using curriculum mapping and mapping out our year-long lesson plans.

"This will allow us to make sure we are not overlapping instruction and we can use class time more wisely to teach new concepts," Mrs. Styron continued. She added that each day the mapping would be updated and altered to ensure the instruction meets the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

She explained that curriculum mapping was a method of aligning the instruction so the skills taught have a common thread and give the lessons meaning.

Mrs. Styron said students in kindergarten, first and second grade all study weather. With curriculum mapping, each teacher knows what was taught previously and can build on that without losing valuable instructional time teaching the same concepts.

"As an entire faculty, this mapping will make us all more aware of what we are doing instead of teaching in isolation."

Mrs. Lilley gave the example of the study of the economic impact of commercial fishing in science in the eighth grade. With curriculum mapping, teachers work together. Student might study species in biology, pounds and percents in math, production in life cycles and economic changes in social studies. They might also write, read and interview in communications skills, and seek in depth information in research skills.

Dr. Manner will visit Harkers Island Elementary School Oct. 10. Prior to that date, staff will finalize curriculum maps for her review and she will provide them with instruction.

"This partnership with ECU is an excellent opportunity for us, and the teacher resources they are providing are so valuable," Mrs. Styron said.

"Teacher assistant Trudy Rose agreed.

"Curriculum mapping has given me a better concept of what the other classes are teaching and doing, and that makes us all more effective," Mrs. Rose said. "The resources ECU will make available to us are outstanding and will reduce preparation time."

"Curriculum mapping is a team effort that takes collaboration and communication," Mrs. Lilley said. "The collaboration enables a school to see where there might be weak instructional links or where important concepts are not being taught. The goal is to be more efficient in our planning and to make the most effective use of student learning time."