

The background is a solid blue color with a complex white line pattern. This pattern consists of various geometric shapes, including circles, rectangles, and lines, some of which are interconnected to form a grid-like structure. There are also some curved lines and arrows, suggesting a technical or engineering drawing. The overall effect is one of precision and innovation.

Meet Our Innovators



Gabriela Aiello attended Rutgers University and received a B.A. and a M.A.T. in Spanish. Currently she is a Spanish teacher at Hammarskjold. *Innovation: Kickstart Door Questions* - As students enter the classroom the teacher asks them a question in the target language. Students must answer the question correctly to enter. Students are able to start class with success in the target language before class even begins and they are ready to learn!



Lori Ann Spinelli attended Brooklyn College where she received a M.S. in Education. Lori currently teaches Spanish at Hammarskjold. *Innovation: Video Conferencing Around The World* - Students explore an authentic learning opportunity to globally connect with other students around the world. This project is designed to motivate students to communicate with native speakers and gain knowledge of language and culture.



Anthony W. Alexander III attended The University of Rhode Island and Montclair State University where he received his undergraduate degree. In addition, he received his masters in Educational Leadership from Thomas Edison State College. He is currently a Physical Education teacher at Churchill.

Innovation: Google Classroom in PE! Wait, What?! - Google classroom supports the way students use technology and social media. Google classroom provides the opportunity to flip the classroom and have time for robust conversations in class. Pertinent topics and activities are introduced via Google classroom ahead of time thus maximizing activity time and minimizing the time a teacher is talking. Google classroom has added so much value to Physical Education class.



Laura Renté attended Saint Mary's College and received her B.A. in French Literature and Education. She received her M.A. in French Literature from Montclair State University. She is certified in K-12 French. Laura currently teaches French 2 and 3 at Churchill.

Innovation: Powtoons for a Presentation - Students use the Powtoons website to create slides for an oral presentation in French. Students create animated slides with words to illustrate what they are presenting. Students can either speak to the audience or record their voices.



Jessica Figueroa attended Monmouth University. She graduated with a B.A. in History and Education with honors. Jessica teaches first grade at Bowne-Munro.

Innovation: Zing - Zing is a reading resource that provides unlimited access to thousands of authentic eBooks in English and Spanish. Books are assigned to students based on genre or reading level. Students utilize on demand features such as digital note taking, highlighting, bookmarking, and a dictionary tool. Reading prompts and constructed responses are available for students to answer.



Rachel Holzapfel attended The College of New Jersey and graduated with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education. She has both P-3 and K-5 teaching certificates. Rachel has taught third grade at Bowne-Munro for four years.

Innovation: Zing - Zing is a reading resource that provides unlimited access to thousands of authentic eBooks in English and Spanish. Books are assigned to students based on genre or reading level. Students utilize on demand features such as digital note taking, highlighting, bookmarking, and a dictionary tool. Reading prompts and constructed responses are available for students to answer.



Cecilia Cortés-Fabrizio was born in Argentina where she attended college and received a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. She has certification as a Teacher of Spanish. She is currently teaching at Hammaraskjold. *Innovation: World Languages E-Portfolio* - Students create an online portfolio on Google where they file videos and recordings they have created in Spanish. Students continue to add to their portfolios so they can appreciate their progress as they become proficient Spanish speakers.



Mike Swayze attended Georgian Court University and received a Bachelor Degree. He is currently enrolled in a Master's program for Administration and Leadership. Mike has been teaching students with special needs for ten years at Hammarskjold.

Innovation: Educating Students Through Social Networks - Using an application called Edmodo students reflect on lessons in class and answer questions provided by the teacher which enhance their skills. In addition, Edmodo provides a social outlet for students to improve their communication skills with one another.



Erik Myer attended Rutgers University where he received his B.S. in Exercise Science and Sports Studies. He earned his Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from The College of New Jersey. Erik has also earned an additional 30 credits from the East Brunswick Masters Program. For the past 19 years, Erik has taught elementary PE at Warnsdorfer. *Innovation: Plickers - Plickers* is an assessment tool that involves technology via iPad/iPhone and Plickers cards to assess student learning.



Ashley Balzofiore attended Ramapo College of NJ where she obtained a B.A. in Psychology and Elementary Education Certification as well as Middle School Math and Science Content Area Certification. She is a fourth grade math, science, and social studies teacher at Bowne-Munro School.

Innovation: Pear Deck - *Pear Deck* is an interactive program which allows students to share mathematical problem solving strategies with each other. Students first work in pairs to solve a math problem online through electronic model drawing. Then, all responses are anonymously shared with the whole class on the SMART board. The students can analyze and discuss each other's work in a safe environment, building a strong community of learners and analytic thinkers.



Patricia Colaizzi attended Rutgers University where she earned a B.A in Psychology and Elementary Education Certification. She was previously a classroom teacher and is currently a Math Specialist at Bowne-Munro School.

Innovation: Pear Deck - *Pear Deck* is an interactive program which allows students to share mathematical problem solving strategies with each other. Students first work in pairs to solve a math problem online through electronic model drawing. Then, all responses are anonymously shared with the whole class on the SMART board. The students can analyze and discuss each other's work in a safe environment, building a strong community of learners and analytic thinkers.



Kelly Grotrian attended Rutgers University, the Graduate School at Rutgers Newark and New Jersey Institute of Technology. Kelly received her B.A. in Psychology and a M.A.T in General History. Currently she teaches AP US History & US History II at the High School.

Innovation: Video-Based Questions Activity (VBQ) - Through the use of Google Forms, teachers and students can design formative and summative assessments on a variety of topics using various forms of media. This innovation can be used at any level and for any content area as it is centered around the idea of allowing students to work at their own pace with the use of a Chromebook/computer and headphones. This innovation increases student engagement as well as encourages students to take ownership over their learning. To see this innovation, please visit <http://grotrian.weebly.com/vbqs.html>.



Elaine Ferreira attended the State University of New York at Albany and received a B.A. in French and M.A. in Education. In addition, she received her M.A. in Educational Administration from the University of Scranton as well as a French Education Certification. Elaine has taught sixth and seventh grade French at Hammarskjold for the last 27 years.

Innovation: Bon Appétit French Cooking Classes Let's learn how to make French food! - Once a month, students participate in French cooking classes after school. Students have made everything from Quiche to Ratatouille to Chocolate Fondue. They cook the different dishes in school and bring home the leftovers and recipes to share with their families.



Taylor Venice attended Monmouth University and received a B.A. in English and Education. She is currently a third grade teacher at Memorial School.

Innovation: Video Number Stories - Video Number Stories are teacher-created videos depicting authentic mathematical situations which engage young learners in mathematics and increase problem solving attack skills. Students view the videos, determine the operations and generate diverse word problems based on their understandings of the situations illustrated in the videos. Next, students compare their stories with those crafted by their peers, building rich math discussions and new understandings. The unique problems created are then used as lead-ins to focus lessons, extension activities, as well as problem-solving inquiry sessions.