The Ohio Partnership for the Far East Region Science Teachers
RAYMOND BEIERSDORFER[1], W. GREGG STURRUS[2], Youngstown State University — The Ohio Partnership for Far East Region Science Teachers (OPFERST) is a three-year project funded by Federal Math Science Partnership Funds through a grant to the Ohio Dept. of Education. OPFERST is a partnership (opferst.ysu.edu) of Youngstown State University science and education faculty, trained facilitators and the county and city science consultants. Every (47) school district in the region signed on and during the first year 32 districts participated. During the first two years, 198 teachers representing Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, as well as Warren City and Youngstown City schools have participated. The vision of OPFERST is to improve the teaching and learning of the Ohio Science Academic Content Standards. Project goals are: 1) Increase science content knowledge of teachers; 2) Implement effective instructional practices; 3) Improve students performance in science; and 4) Develop professional learning communities which will lead to programmatic changes within districts. Goals one through three are met by modeling inquiry-based methods for teaching science content standards. Goal four is met by ongoing meetings through-out the school year, classroom visits by YSU faculty and fieldtrips to the YSU Campus by classes led by OPFERST teachers. Evaluation of OPFERST includes demographic and classroom practice data, pre- and post-tests of participants, journals, homework and the administration of evaluation instruments with some OPFERST participants' students.

[1]Geological and Environmental Sciences
[2]Physics and Astronomy