



A Union of Professionals

AFT ER&D

A Professional Development Program

Educational Research and Dissemination Program

Course Offerings of ER&D – Summer 2008

Delivering Effective Professional Development*

**A mini-course for first-time participants and those trained prior to 2001.*

This mini-course, Delivering Effective Professional Development (DEPD), will assist you in your role as a trainer and coordinator of an ER&D program. You will receive guidelines as to what an effective presenter must know and do, i.e., presentation techniques, planning an ER&D session and ways to succeed with adult learners. As a site coordinator, you will learn how to manage an ER&D program and build local capacity for its growth and expansion. You will observe presentation strategies and begin preparation for a practice presentation in your strand.

Beginning Reading Instruction

This course focuses on how children learn to read and the best ways to teach beginning reading from kindergarten to the end of second grade. Because the course contains considerable information on how students develop basic decoding skills, it is also useful for teachers and paraprofessionals working with older students who are still having difficulty with decoding and fluency.

The course presents a synthesis of the research consensus for beginning reading instruction. In addition, the most effective strategies for teaching beginning reading are provided with an emphasis on helping students develop phonemic awareness, knowledge of the alphabetic system, phonics/decoding skills, print awareness, fluency, and comprehension.

Foundations of Effective Teaching I: Organizing the Classroom Environment for Teaching and Learning

This core ER&D course addresses the fundamental aspects of teaching and learning that are relevant for teachers and classroom paraprofessionals in all grade levels and subject areas. It examines proven practices for establishing and maintaining classroom management, maximizing use of learning time, questioning and feedback skills, homework, interactive guided instruction strategies, and scaffolding techniques. Covering core topics critical to successful classroom practice, *Foundations of Effective Teaching I* is recommended as the primary offering for all ER&D local sites. It is frequently used as the basis for induction, mentor, and peer assistance programs and is an essential part of Local Site Coordinator training.

Foundations of Effective Teaching II: Building Academic Success

This course addresses the challenges teachers are facing today to raise the performance levels of all students while also closing the achievement gap. It addresses both environmental and instructional conditions that foster student achievement by (1) examining the effects that teacher expectations and the social context of the classroom have on student learning, and (2) providing an in-depth study of two instructional models—cognitive apprenticeship and cooperative small groups—that actively engage students and address the diversity of their learning needs. This course extends and deepens many concepts introduced in Foundations I; it can be taken either in consecutive years or as an advanced offering for seasoned trainers. While Foundations I is ideal to

deliver to novice teachers and paraprofessionals, this advanced course is targeted to more seasoned educators who are prepared to engage in in-depth study and reflective practice. It also may be used to support school improvement teams or schoolwide initiatives to raise achievement. Pre-requisite: Foundations of Effective Teaching I.

Instructional Strategies That Work for All Disciplines

This course provides practical applications of instructional strategies that are outlined in the research base on effective instruction and have been proven to support student learning. At the center of this course are cognitive strategies that foster critical thinking and the transferability of skills learned. Course participants will learn how to evaluate curriculum materials for any content area, organize content for learning, and develop or evaluate scoring guides for student tasks. These strategies can be applied in K-12 settings and are particularly helpful for students with special needs.

Managing Antisocial Behavior

The anti-social actions of a small but powerful number of students in school not only put their own academic success at risk but threaten the learning environment for everyone. This course presents research on emotional and behavioral problems of students who consistently act out. Participants will learn strategies to reduce and/or prevent the occurrence of disruptive or dangerous outbreaks.

Managing Student Behavior for Support Staff

This course is designed for school-related personnel (SRPs) and paraprofessionals, who have contact with and/or are responsible for overseeing the behavior and safety of large numbers of students outside of the classroom setting, whether that setting is the cafeteria, the school bus, the office, the playground or the school corridors. The course will teach school-related personnel and paraprofessionals about how to manage large groups of students as well as difficult and disruptive students.

Reading Comprehension Instruction

This course focuses on the research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong reading comprehension skills. It provides participants with a synthesis of the research base on reading comprehension instruction and vocabulary development. Participants examine, discuss, and evaluate the appropriate application of a range of instructional strategies from explicit to implicit teaching of comprehension skills. Strategies are presented for increasing student comprehension of both narrative and expository texts—including content area textbooks. In addition, approaches are presented to help students monitor their own comprehension and apply appropriate “fix-up” strategies when comprehension is not achieved. Practice in using these instructional strategies and examples of student work are embedded in each unit.

This course is appropriate for all K-12 teachers who need to help increase their students’ comprehension of text—whether that text is a literature selection or a subject area textbook.

The School, Family and Community: Supporting Student Learning

The primary function of this course is to help school staff understand how they can assist parents to better support their children as learners. Topics explored include: (1) using effective communication strategies to develop learning partnerships with families; (2) designing more productive homework assignments to involve families; (3) explaining classroom work and grading systems to parents; and (4) developing school wide parent involvement plans.

Thinking Mathematics 1: Ten Principles, Addition/Subtraction & Counting

This course focuses on research about how children learn mathematics and how these findings can be applied in the classroom. Ten Principles capture practices that lead to a better understanding of math for all students and are applicable at all levels. In this course, they are exemplified through the research on counting, addition, and subtraction. The course takes a broader look at the importance of patterns and relationships throughout math, addresses the kind of questioning that promotes thinking in math class, and provides a framework for thinking about curriculum and lessons.

Thinking Mathematics 2: Multiplication, Division, & Proportional Reasoning

The second part of Thinking Math presents research-based strategies for teaching and learning multiplication, division, and beginning proportional reasoning. Primary teachers and paraprofessionals can see how children in the earliest grades can build a foundation of understanding as they begin to deal with problems that typically are reserved for later years. Teachers of older students learn how to promote understanding of basic mathematical properties and laws that will be used when students study algebra. The course also shows a connection between several of the practices suggested by Thinking Math and the study of higher mathematics. ***Requirements: Participants must have completed Thinking Math 1 at AFT Summer Institute or locally.***

Thinking Mathematics 3: Fractions, Decimals, Ratio

This course, the third in the *Thinking Math* series, tackles one of the most challenging areas of middle school math: fractions, decimals, percent and ratio. Learn the thinking behind mistakes that students make over and over and develop strategies for helping them make sense of this domain. Primary teachers, who often introduce basic fraction concepts and use decimals in the context of money, can benefit along with those who teach older youngsters. ***Requirements: Participants should have taken Thinking Math 1 and 2 at the AFT Summer Institute or locally.***

Thinking Mathematics for Middle School: Journey to Algebra

This course is built on the premise that students who are struggling with mathematics when they get to middle school have missed some fundamental concepts that must be learned before they can be successful with middle school curriculum. Thus the course includes core concepts from other TM courses and looks at them for middle school youngsters. The culminating unit is on beginning Algebra. Each unit covers its topic starting with whole numbers and progressing through fractions and negative numbers. Teachers can see how early concepts develop and thread up through levels of the curriculum, providing insight into what students might need. Because of the breadth of content this is a seven-day course. ***This course has no prerequisite.***

Within each course there are presentations of research concepts and a variety of small and large group activities designed to make participants more familiar with the research and its classroom applications. Because participants will be expected to train others back home, they are required to do a "practice presentation" for the rest of the class during training. This presentation (1) provides an opportunity for reinforcement of the research findings for the whole group; (2) gives the participant some experience in applying the adult learning theory and presentation skills taught during the course; and, (3) gives the participant experience at presenting in front of a group of peers.