



MESPA In-District Professional Development Program

The MESPA In-District Professional Development Program is designed to provide high quality professional development customized to address the specific needs identified by individual schools and/or districts. Programs are designed to provide core knowledge, followed by opportunities for reflection, coaching, and guided practice as participants implement the knowledge acquired in workshop sessions. Workshops can be designed and scheduled for a variety of audiences including paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators and parents. The following list includes examples of potential workshop topics and descriptions.

Please let us know if you have a specific topic of interest in addition to the workshops listed below.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY MESPA's assistive technology in-district program provides essential support services for educators looking to support the diverse learning needs of the children they serve. Some of the customized workshops offered might include: Assistive Technology for All Learners, Introduction to Universal Design: Building Accessible Learning Environments, Overcoming Writing Barriers in the Classroom, and Accessing Curriculum with IntelliTools Classroom Suite.

COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION Workshop participants will learn about a wide range of proven methods to help children gain the skills necessary to become effective readers. This series of workshops will focus on research-based skills and strategies and how to match the methods and materials that are best suited for each individual child.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT Participants will learn about the MESPA Six-Point Framework and the Baldrige PDSA Framework for continuous improvement. The components of the two models will allow districts to create a systematic and systemic way to continuously improve. This work can be applied from the district to the classroom level.

CURRICULUM MAPPING Workshop attendees will learn how to collect real time data on what is happening in their classrooms and to use that information to facilitate alignment to state standards, identify instructional gaps in content, thinking processes, and assessments.

DATA DRIVEN DIALOGUE FOCUSED ON IMPROVED STUDENT LEARNING Dialogue that leads to collaborative planning and problem solving focused on improved student learning is an essential component of effective teaching and school improvement efforts. In this series of workshops, participants will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to work within a collaborative culture to use data effectively to inform instructional decisions and school improvement efforts.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION In order to meet the needs of the diverse learners in today's classrooms and schools, administrators and teachers must plan and execute effective lessons that accommodate each student's level of readiness, learning style and interests. Participants in these workshops will acquire the knowledge base necessary to meet these varied needs.

EFFECTIVE MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION This series of workshops will address the major components of effective mathematics instruction. Participants will develop a broader understanding of the NCTM Standards and increase their skill base in instructional strategies rooted in research. Administrators will learn about evaluation practices that clarify the effectiveness of mathematics instruction.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM Workshop participants will develop a solid knowledge base on language acquisition, effective strategies for teaching English Language Learners in the regular classroom, and assessment methods. The workshop will also address technological applications for English Language Learners.

INTRODUCTION TO BALANCED LITERACY This workshop is designed specifically for paraprofessionals who assist teachers during a literacy block. Paraprofessionals will be introduced to the concept of balanced literacy, develop a common language around reading and writing, and strengthen their role as instructional assistant within the literacy block.

LEADERSHIP CONSULTING Consulting is available to districts that need to deal with the many issues that require effective leadership from building administrators and “teacher leaders” as they face the challenges necessary to move forward. This will include customized consulting on a regular basis around such topics as group process, running effective meetings, making effective group decisions, dealing with resistance to change, and similar topics created and adapted to meet the needs of the individual school and/or district. Consulting generally takes place in a seminar format, but where appropriate, workshops for larger groups may be used.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES The focus of this initiative is to assist districts in setting up job embedded communities of practice, in which principals and teachers work together to improve teaching and learning. The writings of the Dufours, Wagner, Wenger and Lencioni will provide a research base for this work. Principals will gain a stronger role as an instructional leader, and teachers will explore different leadership roles. The communities of practice could include Lesson Study, grade level work on benchmark assessments and vertical teams to increase curriculum coordination.

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT This series of workshops is designed to introduce participants to a set of research-based instructional strategies that have been identified as having positive effects on student learning by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering and Jane Pollock in Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement.

SOCIAL STUDIES WORKSHOP SERIES The focus of these Social Studies workshops is to identify concept threads, while developing and sharing strategies and practical teaching ideas. State and national standards, the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework, and a school’s curriculum will all be addressed, with an eye to considering what will be covered in the planned testing environment. Appropriate software and Internet resources will be included. Districts can schedule one or more of the following workshops offered in this series: “Using Primary Source Materials in the Social Studies Classroom, K-8”; “Exploring the Social Studies Framework: Addressing the Standards, K-4”; and “Exploring the Social Studies Framework: Addressing the Standards, 5-8.”

STANDARDS-BASED TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT This series will address the necessary steps to move a district from a textbook driven culture to a standards-based one. Participants will learn to use the Backwards Design model of curricular planning advanced by McTighe and Wiggins; they will create "power standards," based on the work of Ainsworth & Reeves; they will identify necessary standards in the core subjects, using the research of Marzano & Heystead; and, they will create interim assessments designed to measure progress on the power standards. An added feature can be the development of a standards-based report card.

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