



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
Summer 2009-2010
FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: A Sensory Approach to the Curriculum

List of group members: Cheryl Kubas, Janice Cottrell, Trish Sandell, Liz Menter, & Jane Whittock

Describe the initial objectives of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.

The objectives of this study group consisted of independent reading of assigned chapters each week and answering various questions regarding those chapters. At times, the group was asked to discover three new techniques and apply those to past or current students, describing how using that technique would have improved student learning.

Other times, we were told to look for "Aha!" moments within the assigned text, and then share those with the group. "Aha" moments were defined as things that we read that made us come to attention in some way and think "Wow, I always thought that," or "I wondered why that worked."

By the third week we met, we were each assigned a chapter to outline and lead a discussion at the study group. Finally, we looked into the often tedious job of record keeping and learning/curriculum documentation.

No changes or adjustments were necessary throughout the course of our study group. The initial plan worked well, and it was unanimous that the work load, presentation, and discussions were helpful, timely, and stayed on track throughout the time we met.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

- Identify parts of the readings that were personally significant to each participant and relate that to past or current students
- Share personal professional experiences with each group member that relate to the topics
- Adapt various approaches that will be useful in our classrooms

- Compare the Curriculum Document that was provided and how it corresponds to the NYS Standards for Alternate Assessment, planning and development of student IEP's, and record keeping.
- Individually research the resources provided in the text
- Adapt the curriculum document to use for mapping and planning purposes for our team

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

The action plan was easily implemented after the first meeting. Chapters were assigned, the group did the assigned work, and the discussions that followed were rich and full of interesting information.

We all felt that although some of the text was difficult to apply due to the many acronyms used for the Great Britain National Education School System. However, the novel information as well as the vindication of realizing that a lot of what we already do is actually founded in research and is a best practice was well worth wading through those unfamiliar terms.

Evaluate the impact of the study group effort on teacher/student performance. How has this study group changed you as a teacher? Do you anticipate that any of your teaching practices will have changed?

- We felt that the study group inspired us to try new things that we may not have thought of on our own. Both the use of the text and the discussions with colleagues gave us new techniques to attempt for the coming year
- Confirmed our instincts and thoughts on what we considered to be best practices.
- Will enhance parent involvement/district involvement through the use of video taping student progress for use at conferences and IEP meetings.

What evidence do you expect to see of student achievement improving as a result of your participating in this study group?

We expect that we will have a more precise record of student achievement due to increased knowledge and new methods of record keeping and documentation.

Additionally many of the techniques and resources mentioned in the text will

be implemented in our classrooms this school year.

What evidence is there that the objectives of the study group has/has not been met?

As a group, it was our unanimous opinion that the objectives of the study group have been met. We completed the book, discussed all the chapters and have a clear idea of how to implement and utilize the techniques that we think will enhance student learning in our classrooms.

Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?

The group felt as individuals and as a whole that it was absolutely worth our time. It built camaraderie and helped us become a more solid team by getting to know each other prior to working with each other in the fall. We discussed student learning, common students, how the use of common strategies and goals will enhance student learning as our students progress through the various teachers on our team.

How will the study group information be shared?

Our team has already has met with our principal to share the information that we have learned via this study group. He is in favor of us implementing all of the techniques we mentioned in this report and was thrilled, that we, as professionals, took the time to apply for this grant and spent time during our summer break, to work on a collegial improvement impetus for our team of students.