

# Culminating Learning Project

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## 1. Engage the workgroup

Briefly describe the composition of your program improvement workgroup.

| Checklist  | Response  |
|--|---|
| 1. ___ I identified the number of staff on the workgroup.      | The total of staff will be four.  |
| 2. ___ I described the positions of the staff on the workgroup | Kara - Math Instructor<br>David - ESOL/English & Math Instructor<br>Bev - Transitions/Continuing Education & Careers Consultant<br>Christine - Reading Instructor |

**2. Identify the program component to target for program improvement**

List the program components that need attention that you identified from self-assessments, research review, and data analysis. Indicate the ONE program component that the workgroup selected to target in your pilot project.

| Checklist  | Response   |
|--|--|
| 1. ___ I listed the needs identified by the self assessments.  | Needs identified in self-assessment:<br><br>Integrated Instruction   |
| 2. ___ I listed the needs identified by the research review.   | Needs identified in research review:   |
| 3. ___ I listed the needs identified by the data analysis.     | Additional integrated instruction is needed.   |
| 4. ___ I listed ONE of those needs for us to use in the pilot. | Needs identified through data analysis:<br><br>Teachable lesson plans; variety of ‘hands-on’ (ex: maps); proof of lesson plans to manager; intermittent goals/steps in process for students to self-check; student choice, specific comprehension strategies, more science & social studies sessions<br><br>Prioritized need or program component:<br><br>Teachable lesson plans with hands-on components. |

Briefly describe the process used to select the targeted component, as well as the process used to identify the parts of the targeted program component that you want to keep and the parts that need new strategies.

| Checklist   | Response  |
|---|---|
| <p>1. ___ I described the process the workgroup used to narrow the needs down to the one program component to be used in the pilot.</p> <p>I described how we examined the current program component to identify:</p> <p>2. ___ what we are doing now that we want to keep, and</p> <p>3. ___ what parts of the program component that need new strategies.</p> | <p>The Focus Group received results from the survey to review. After they reviewed the survey, they were given a copy of the article “Increasing Student Achievement for Basic Skills Students” from the LEA book. The Focus Group was given a questionnaire based on the questions from the Culminating Learning Project: Part 1. The next step will be to have the Focus Group discuss the results.</p> <p>There are times that staff gets wrapped up in what’s going on in class (individual instruction) and doesn’t pay attention to the integrated instruction. Currently, we do some integrated instruction. It should be brought into class in almost every session. Some of the lessons work and we want to keep those lessons and not reinvent curriculum.</p> <p>Lesson plans should be shared by staff of what works and doesn’t. Staff should take different sections of integrated instruction and use it (to see what works or doesn’t work) instead of having one staff member trying to do it all.</p> |

**3. Set a vision and goals**

Vision: **Integrated Instruction** will be working well when...**it is used in classrooms on a regular basis.**

(Fill in the program component you are working on)

| Checklist  | Response   |
|--|--|
| <p>1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in completing the vision statement.</p> <p>2. ___ I included the final vision statement.</p> | <p>Integrated Instruction will be working well when it is used in classrooms on a regular basis 50 percent of the time. This will allow time for individual instruction, also.</p> <p>(We already have a curriculum in math/language. Summer 2013 all staff ABLE/ESOL participated in creating integrated lesson plans that are related to GED 2014 that can be used from low level to high. The staff needed to 'buy in' to integrated lesson plans and the one way to do that was to have the staff create/organize these lessons plans from start to finish. They also researched GED 2014 to find out how they could best do this. The outcome was surprising. More lesson plans are being organized and current lesson plans are being used and 'tweaked' as needed.)</p> |

Goals: When we are finished, we will have achieved the following...

| Checklist   | Response   |
|---|--|
| 1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in anticipating achievements | I keep repeating to them that we have to work as a group or 'team' in order to achieve our goals. We make these decisions in a group effort.   |
| 2. ___ I included that list   | The Focus Group created a list of possible ways to achieve the goal of Integrated Instruction, which included: thematic units, change current curriculum/resources, combine subjects (ex: Reading with science or social studies), use of more technology, |

Evaluation criteria: What evidence will you collect to determine if you meet your goals? Identify each of the end user groups and the evidence each end user group identified as evidence they would need to convince them to use the new strategy.

| End User           | Evidence to Collect  |
|--------------------|--|
| Instructor         | Three personal integrated lessons plans (it could be something already created on-online), but they have to use it in class and make sure it 'works' before presenting to the rest of staff, include benchmarks. |
| Instructor         | Make sure lesson plans are being turned in on regular basis to show proof at various sites that process is being carried through.  |
| Instructor/Manager | Student Portfolio – show proof of work being done/recorded.  |
| Manager            | Provide variety of charts and reference materials to be used in presentations.   |
| Instructor         | Observe and document effectiveness of lesson plan/frequency to make sure that it is working in the classroom. If not, find something else that does work and share with other instructors.                       |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Instructor   | Create intermittent goals/steps in the process for students to self-check. (syllabus? Will have to question this step from the instructor that presented it.) |
| Instructor   | Give students choice of lesson focus.   |
| Tutors/Aides | Provide lesson plans that build off of teacher’s lesson plans.  |

**Checklist**

1. \_\_\_ I identified each of the end users (e.g., teachers, tutors, aides, managers) who will be using the new strategies.
2. \_\_\_ I solicited from each group the evidence they would need to convince them the new strategy worked, and I included each piece of evidence identified.

**4. Gather and select promising practices**

Briefly describe where you looked for models or strategies that would address your targeted component.

| Checklist  | Response   |
|--|--|
| 3. ___ I identified all of the sources we explored to find models and strategies that address our program improvement component. | We decided that our curriculum had to change due to the new GED. We reviewed our current curriculum and the director confirmed that we had a good base to start with. From there we explored GED 2014. Over the summer and beyond instructors individually investigated components of GED 2014 from watching webinars, reading information, and actually taking the GED 2014 pre-test. Not only did they work individually, they came together as a group and discussed findings. This created an instructor ‘buy in’/team work. |

Briefly describe the strategy, procedure, or practice that the workgroup selected to pilot. Include a description of any adaptations that were made to make the strategy “fit” your program.

| Checklist   | Response  |
|---|---|
| 1. ___ I included a description of the new strategies selected to pilot test.   | The new strategies included a managed enrollment of a six week time frame. This six week time period has a managed enrollment (only one day per month a student can miss), and a ‘themed’ lesson is taught. EX: Cloud Seeding or Daylight Savings Time. This lesson implements all aspects of GED 2014. A teacher integrates different areas of the GED into the lesson with extended response, math, science, social studies and it is based around the theme that is introduced at the beginning of the six week session. It was piloted at a smaller site. It was very successful with an increase in student hours/retention. |
| 2. ___ I included a description of the adaptations we made to the new strategy and the rationale for those adaptations. | Instead of a larger site (it just wasn’t organized and working), it was moved to a smaller site. Lessons were geared towards GED2014 and tweaked as we went along to fit the student body that was attending. Mid-stream through the project the attendance policy changed where a student could only miss one day a month. This took place in the second session. It was to make our ABLE classes more like going to a job/school, making the student accountable.   |

**5. Develop a pilot testing plan**

Describe the process that was used to select the pilot sites - what characteristics did you consider in the selection process?

| Checklist   | Response  |
|---|---|
| I included a description of:  |   |
| 4. ___ who was involved in selecting the pilots                     | Laure Gauntner, instructor and Doris Schoning, Maplewood Career Center’s Adult Basic & Literacy Education Program Coordinator.  |
| 5. ___ the criteria and rationale we used for selecting the pilots. | We decided that with GED 2014 a change needed to happen with not only lesson plans, but with the way they were presented. Instructors were given enough time to prepare beginning in summer 2013 to January 2014. It also gave us enough time to review what was being created and make some adjustments as needed, changes are on-going. |



What type of training was necessary for the pilot sites? Describe how this was provided.

| Checklist   | Response   |
|---|--|
| I included a description of:  |  |
| 1. ___ the training that was necessary to get the pilot sites up to speed | Instructors attended the Teacher’s Summit, read information, viewed webinars, and shared ideas. They also took the pre-test for GED 2014 so they could experience what the student would experience. |
| 2. ___ who delivered the training   | Staff attended PD in Columbus, used the internet/webinars, read information, took GED 2014, and worked together for ideas.   |

Complete the chart outlining your interim benchmarks, activities, timeline, and responsible parties for planning, implementing, and evaluating your pilot project.

| Interim Benchmarks | Activities   | Completion Date           | Lead Person Responsible for the Activity         |
|--------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| Planning           | Lesson plan creation   | August 2013/present       | Schoning   |
|                    | Lesson plan revision   | Fall 2013/Winter 2014     | Schoning/Gauntner                                |
|                    | Lesson plan revision to theme with two lead instructors at main site   | February 2014/In progress | Klein/Crites                                     |
|                    |  |                           |  |
| Implementing       | Pilot begins at second largest site/ Theme of “Cloud Seeding” introduced.  | 1/9/14                    | Gauntner   |
|                    | Theme is carried out for a total of six weeks by staff, which included language, science, social studies, and math.                                      | 3/5/14                    | Lacey  |
|                    | Theme started in January and ended in March. Extended longer due to all of the time we had off due to weather.   | 3/5/14                    | Dale-Sullivan                                    |
|                    | Science, math, language, and social studies taught by staff with “Cloud seeding” theme.<br>Second theme introduced...Daylight Savings Time (in progress) | 3/5/14<br>3/17/14         | Bowman<br>Gauntner, Bowman, Lacey, Dale-Sullivan |
| Evaluating         | Staff/on-going   | 3/5/14                    | Gauntner/Schoning                                |



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What were your primary financial expenditures for the pilot project?

| Expenditure Category   | Cost |
|--|------|
| Process fell into place with what staff was already receiving financially. They are given ½ per session they instruct as lesson planning time. It was more of organizing the staff and telling them ‘this is what we are going to do’ and giving them the opportunity to ‘buy in.’ |      |
| Staff was also given extra hours for lesson plan creation, observation, etc...but that was already in the budget.  |      |

## 6. Select and prepare the pilot sites

Briefly describe the process you used to prepare the pilot sites to implement the new strategy or procedure.

| Checklist  | Response  |
|--|---|
| I included a description of:<br><br>1. ___ initial meetings I had with pilot sites to explain their roles and responsibilities | Instructors meet on a regular basis at the main site/smaller site. (Meetings were held three days a week.) The pilot was eventually started at a smaller site. I was able to oversee the pilot on a daily basis. At that site I had three instructors from the main site rotate and present integrated, theme-based lesson plans. It took a while for the instructor to understand that these changes <u>were</u> going to happen. Eventually, I had to start the theme and assign instructors their day of teaching. Finally, they knew it wasn’t going away and they were expected to instruct when scheduled. Now it’s running smoothly and the ‘buy in’ is there. |
| 2. ___ consultants or other staff used as a resource to support the pilot staff  | Instructors from other sites were invited to visit the pilot site and observe. After observing they created own lessons and presented at the smaller site. Staff learned from each other. It was a great experience.  |
| 3. ___ any incentives you provided to pilot staff to encourage and/or reward their participation                               | If they participated, they were given the opportunity to obtain extra hours from observing, participating, and creating lessons. The lesson that was created needed to be geared towards the current theme being taught (theme that was observed).<br><br>Staff was instructed that they had to keep all of their notes, lesson plans ideas, meet and share ideas, and finally create the formal lesson plan. A   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>4. ___ how you made sure that pilot staff knew the evaluation criteria and data they would need to collect to determine impact.</p> | <p>binder was kept in the classroom and at the end of every session they instructed they filled out a sheet with brief notes of what was presented and a copy of their lesson plan so the next instructor knew what had taken place the day before. (We have three/four instructors rotating at the smaller site.) Instructors were notified that surveys would go out to students at the end of the six week period. Also, reporting for attendance would confirm results.</p> |
|--|---|

## 7. Conduct the pilot, measure the impact, and develop/fine tune PD and resources

Briefly describe the results of your pilot project based on your evaluation criteria for each end user group.

| Checklist   | Response   |
|---|--|
| <p>3. ___ I included an overall narrative of the results of the pilot.</p>    | <p>The results of the pilot were very positive from instructors and students. We are finding out our instructors are very talented, but they do need a lead teacher(s) to guide them. We have corrected this by having two main teachers lead our daily Maplewood staff during lesson planning time. The two main each have two nights where they guide staff on how to create/map lessons. After staff creates, they are turned into lead instructors and reviewed and then (if needed) corrected by that individual staff member. This allows all staff to be on the same page. Students are enjoying the ‘theme lessons’ and the way class is now taught with integrated lessons.</p> |
| <p>4. ___ I included results based on the end users’ evaluation criteria.</p> | <p>Students filled out surveys and there was a positive response to the ‘theme’ lessons. They like the extended hours and are not bothered by the new attendance policy. In fact, if they cannot make it to class they are signing in on Facebook to get the lesson for that day or they are attending another site to make up hours. The student base is small (approximately 12 people), but from all our changes since January 9, 2014, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014, which included our integrated, theme-based lessons, extended hours, and new attendance policy our hours have more than doubled.</p>   |

What changes, if any, would you make before you implement the new strategy program-wide?

| Checklist  | Response  |
|--|---|
| 5. ___ I included a description of specific changes I needed to make before implementing program-wide. | We now have two lead instructors. They guide the staff four times a week in lesson plan creation, mapping, etc... so everyone is on the same page. Though the 'themes' have only been in place for a total of 12 weeks (2 sessions), staff has already requested a change in how the lessons are presented. They want a more expanded lesson theme. Since staff has to 'buy in' the change is being granted. Since we have already have tracking with attendance (attendance more than doubled at the smaller site), time will tell if this change is going to work or not. |

### Final Reflection

Briefly describe what you learned from this program improvement project that will help you in future work.

| Checklist  | Response   |
|--|--|
| 3. ___ I included an overview of what I learned from this project. | Our staff is incredibly talented. Their ideas are very surprising/good. At times, our instructors drag their feet, but when they are given the chance to take charge the results can be a refreshing change. |