



The Teacher Center of Broome County

Teacher Study Group Grant Award

2014

FINAL REPORT DUE BY APRIL 7, 2014

DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: *Beyond Gifted Education*

List of group members: Jill Browne, Laura Crouse, Lissa Connelly, Suzy Kitchen, Mary Webster

The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and through e-mail using this form. Send print copy Teacher Center @ WSKG, BOCES Mail Drop #22 and e-mail file to btct@btbooces.org. This report will be posted on the Teacher Center web page at <http://teachercenter.info>.

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

The initial goal of this study group (Beyond Gifted Education) was for the Challenge Enrichment teachers at BCSD to study and reflect on the best practices research in designing and implementing advanced academic programs. With the current trends to meet CCSS and 21 Century learning skills the teachers wanted to study the research and address the most efficient way to provide inclusive enrichment services for students in grades K-8.

We gleaned so much information about the current practices and really struggled with how we could address the ways to best to serve the advanced learners. The biggest adjustment we made was in our mindset. How much could we *actually* influence the current practice in our district? And, what would that look like short term and long term? This is an area that still needs work.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

We had 6 meetings. The first meeting we had done some outside reading, which we discussed, and evaluated. We also set group norms and used several of the 'what is a study group' resources in the leader packet. The other meetings centered on our 'question'. We decided that each week we would come with a 'burning question' that was evoked from the readings. We shared and discussed the burning question first and then tried to synthesize other issues, revelations, wonderings or suggestions that arose from the readings. Our plan was to share out the above with the Board of Education, and administrators, possibly making suggestions as to best serve the students in our district.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

The plan to share out the issues, revelations, wonderings and suggestions will be discussed with administrators in June. The Challenge teachers really would like to focus on district NEED and how to best meet the needs (district and building wide). This is an area that was truly a strong piece in our reading: define the district need and THEN structure the program around the need. Our suggestions may or may not be implemented, but they will be shared out.

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 will not be able to study the immediate impact on student performance as we were looking at a holistic approach to a district-wide program. As far as changing us as teachers, we did relate many of our readings to some of our current students and began trying to conceive of a 'needs assessment' for our kids. How can we incorporate the strong 21st century learning skills that our students need efficiently given the amount of time that we see them as students? We feel our teaching practices are strong in many areas, but the idea of looking at specific academic need was a new method for us to consider when looking at our curriculum.

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

Our initial goal of study was to learn about current practices in advanced academics, which was exploratory in nature and we did meet that goal. As far as academic achievement, we would hope that our students continue on the strong academic paths they have begun. The Challenge teachers also talked about hopefully looking at data this summer to see where our students may be 'flat lining' and then looking at how this may be incorporated into our curriculum.

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

Our goal of studying and reflecting on best practices research in our field was met. This study group gave us great insight on strengths, flaws and other aspects of our district's current practice for enrichment. We have developed a short plan of where we'd like to proceed, so I'd say we are on our way.

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

The collaborative, collegial sharing in this group was uplifting. Since we are in so many buildings and have little to no common time together, having the time and resources to study and reflect has allowed us to grow professionally. The value of this type of study group was that it gave us an important way to see the 'big picture' of enrichment in our district as a team.

How can we make this study group program better?

This is a fantastic format! We really had some fantastic and amazing discussions. As our study group was not an actual 'action research' plan in a classroom, some of the final report questions were adjusted to account for the need of our group.

A final report is due two weeks after the last meeting or by **April 7, 2014**, whichever date is first. The report must be typed and double-spaced using the provided form. One copy must be submitted in print and the file must be submitted through e-mail to btcc@btbooces.org. Return to the Teacher Center (Mail Drop #22), 601 Gates Rd., Vestal, NY