

Culminating Learning Project

1. Engage the workgroup

Briefly describe the composition of your program improvement workgroup.

Checklist	Response
<p>1. ___ I identified the number of staff on the workgroup.</p> <p>2. ___ I described the positions of the staff on the workgroup</p>	<p>There are a total of five staff members, excluding myself in the workgroup. I wanted to keep the staff diverse and representing different aspects of our program, while also trying to keep my group small and intimate.</p> <p>All but one of the staff members in the workgroup are instructors, but all in different roles and at different sites. One of the staff members is an ESOL instructor, two members are 1st year instructors. One is in our evening Intermediate Level GED class at our home site; the other is in a morning GED class (All Levels) at our Dover site. Another member is our Transition's Coordinator and an evening Lower Level GED instructor at our Home site. The last workgroup member is our current Program Coordinator.</p>

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
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ___ I listed the needs identified by the self assessments. 2. ___ I listed the needs identified by the research review. 3. ___ I listed the needs identified by the data analysis. 4. ___ I listed ONE of those needs for us to use in the pilot. 	<p>Needs identified in self-assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retention of Beginning Literacy Students ▪ Curriculum Alignment for GED 2014 ▪ Community Interaction beyond our Advisory Board ▪ Staff Development for specific Content Areas- Math/Science ▪ Process for teachers to share information/strategies ▪ Instructional Methods that meet student needs and goals <p>Needs identified in research review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Math Curriculum (Meeting student needs and goals) ▪ Storage of Lesson Plans Inadequate for Teacher Access ▪ Use of technology included in daily lessons ▪ Staff Comfort Level with Science/Math ▪ Lack of Study Circles <p>Needs identified through data analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percent of Students failing Math part of GED ▪ Retention of Lower Level Students (Level 1 to 3)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students not returning after testing (even when failing a subject) <p>Prioritized need or program component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revised Math Curriculum/ Lesson Plans (focusing on Levels 3-5)
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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>✓ ___ 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>✓ ___ what we are doing now that we want to keep, and</p> <p>✓ ___ what parts of the program component that need new strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First each workgroup member completed the Program Self-Assessment (Adapted from the Arizona STAR) ▪ Then we met after our monthly staff meeting to discuss the results ▪ Each staff member was emailed before the meeting and asked to list at least 3 program needs that they gathered from the assessment to bring to the meeting and asked to research each area (ask other staff, look online/library, etc.) and determine which area they felt was most important to the program ▪ At our meeting each staff member read the 3 needs they gathered and highlighted their “most important need” ▪ As the staff members read their 3 needs, I typed them into a word document and projected it in our meeting room; highlighting their “most important need” ▪ We took the list and narrowed down the list (easier than I thought, because of similar needs listed by each member) ▪ Then, I took the list to analyze using our Database and schedule our next meeting for early August.

- At our August meeting we discussed the data about lower level students and also data about students who took the GED test and came to our program last year.
- Through discussion and voting, we narrowed our needs down to Math and GED Failures.
- Then we talked about what is most important to the program.
- It was difficult to come to a conclusion on what is the most important.
- We talked about our program's Transition's Math class and what content is covered to see if we could direct students who have failed the Math section of the GED to that course, so they wouldn't have to repeat the normal GED course that includes all subjects.
- Then we discussed what Math is actually getting covered in each of their classes, versus what needs to be covered.
- It was difficult to decide if the need was professional development in Math Content, a need for a system to get students who failed Math back into the classrooms, or a revision of the curriculum that is being used currently
- We decided on revising the curriculum and gearing it towards a new class that would target only math and fill in the gap that we have between our current GED course and our Transitions Course.
- We thought this would be the most necessary, because if we get students to come back to get them ready to retake their Math test but don't have a course that will actually be useful, then the students wouldn't be setup for success.
- The components that we found that we are doing that we want to keep would be our current GED prep class is working great as it is, but we decided to add a Math lesson each day of class. We also decided to revise our

	<p>Transition’s Curriculum as we are forming a new class to cater to our Gap in our Math Instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are planning on calling this new class our Bridge Math class. ▪ We decided that we need a new strategy for making sure students are placed in the best class for their needs. We came up with a Scale Score requirement for each of our classes and are ready to try and implement our new course.
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3. Set a vision and goals

Vision: will be working well when...

(Fill in the program component you are working on)

Checklist	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ I described how I engaged the staff in completing the vision statement. ✓ ___ I included the final vision statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I had my work group brainstorm a fitting vision statement and share them with me in a Google Doc that we named “Vision Statement FY 2014”. Each member was responsible for completing the vision statement individually, and then responsible for commenting on the other group members vision statements. Then I took all of their statement and ideas and combined it into one I felt encompassed all of their ideas, and we tweaked it together in the Google Doc, until we came up with the “Final Vision Statement”. ▪ The Final Vision Statement reads as follows: “ Our Bridge Math class will be working well when student persistence is high, all students are fully engaged in their learning, and Math Gains are evident in their Math TABE scores.”

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

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in anticipating achievements 2. ___ I included that list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After the vision statement was completed and all group members agreed on it, we then all came up with ideas on how we want to accomplish our vision and voted on our goals. ▪ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a separate Bridge Math Course 2. Have a database of Math Lessons that can be shared amongst all instructors 3. Students will make gains of at least 1 level on the Math TABE before exiting 4. Students will obtain 50 plus program hours before exiting the program.

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	Need to find a new instructor who will be teaching the Bridge Math Course. The new instructor will need to have experience with upper level math and will complete the Math TABE and Math Practice GED test before being hired.
Instructor/ Program Coord.	Search for a decent database to store lessons and establish an instructor who will manage the input and organization of lessons into the new database.
Instructor/ABLELINK Manager	Instructor will post-test with TABE when student is ready and compare scores, then turn into ABLELINK Manager; the ABLELINK

	Manager will pull a class report for the Program Coordinator to review.
Instructor/ABLELINK Manager	Instructor will turn in Monthly attendance via Google Docs to the ABLELINK Manager. THE ABLELINK Manager will pull a class attendance report for the Program Coordinator to review.

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
<p>✓ ___ I identified all of the sources we explored to find models and strategies that address our program improvement component.</p>	<p>We used multiple sources to address our target component (Revised Math Curriculum):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colleagues from other ABLE Programs 2. Revised Standards/Common Core 3. GED 2014 Assessment Guides 4. Current Program Curriculum and Lesson Plans 5. COABE Resource Repository 6. OER Commons

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ I included a description of the new strategies selected to pilot test. 	<p>We decided to incorporate technology (Videos and Computers) into each of our Math Lessons, something that wasn't occurring as often in Math as it was in the other content areas. Also helpful because of the new GED 2014 testing format.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ I included a description of the adaptations we made to the new strategy and the rationale for those adaptations. 	<p>The only adaptation that was necessary for us when incorporating technology into each lesson was making sure the sites and videos utilized with our new lessons were able to be used at our Pilot Site, since it is also a K-12 facility.</p>

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
<p>I included a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ who was involved in selecting the pilots ✓ ___ the criteria and rationale we used for selecting the pilots. 	<p>My core 5 staff members who helped identify the “prioritized need” were also involved in selecting the pilot site.</p> <p>The criteria we used for selecting the pilot site was enrollment, retention and TABE Level. Rationale: We needed a decent size group that had consistent attendance and TABE Math Scores between Levels 3 and 5 in order to best utilize the Lesson Plans.</p>

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

Checklist	Response
<p>I included a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ the training that was necessary to get the pilot sites up to speed ✓ ___ who delivered the training 	<p>The Pilot Site teacher was also a part of the core 5 staff members involved in identifying our “prioritized need”. She had to become familiar with all the new web sites and the new lesson plans that were being created, as well as solidifying her Math knowledge in order to teach the new lessons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The “training” was self-paced (becoming familiar with new curriculum and standards/sites) as well as some one-on-one training with the ABLE/GED coordinator on KHAN Academy and LIVEBINDERS.

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	Go through current curriculum, pull lessons that are still relevant	10/31/13	Kara Jarvis and Lisa Swigert
	Organize/Prioritize Topics and SubTopics	10/31/13	Brenda Abel
	Determine Number of Lessons and Length of Pilot Course	11/8/13	Core Group
	Write Curriculum Map and Develop New Lessons	1/17/14	Core Group
Implementing	Load Lessons into a Database (LiveBinders)	1/31/14	Kara Jarvis
	Brief Student Pilot Group	2/10/14	Lisa Swigert
	Start Implementing New Curriculum	2/12/14	Lisa Swigert
Evaluating	Survey Students at Half-Way Point	3/11/14	Lisa Swigert
	Survey Students at End of Curriculum	4/3/14	Lisa Swigert

	Debrief Pilot Instructor for Pros and Cons	4/7/14	Erin Wheeler

What were your primary financial expenditures for the pilot project?

Expenditure Category	Cost
Extra Instructor Hours (Meetings and Lesson Planning)	\$3000
Live Binders Yearly Subscription	\$150

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
<p>I included a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ___ initial meetings I had with pilot sites to explain their roles and responsibilities ✓ ___ consultants or other staff used as a resource to support the pilot staff ✓ ___ any incentives you provided to pilot staff to encourage and/or reward their participation ✓ ___ how you made sure that pilot staff knew the evaluation criteria and data they would need to collect to determine impact. 	<p>I met with the Instructor that I had in mind for my pilot site before I even met with the Core Group to determine our “prioritized need”. I wanted to see if she would be willing and also to explain that I would be needing to meet with her frequently one on one and in a group setting, and that I would also be needing her to implement whatever our group came up with in the next few months. I already ask a lot of my part time staff, but was hopeful that she would agree to help and as I suspected, she was excited and more than willing.</p> <p>Other than my core group of 5, I used the remainder of my staff at our Staff Meetings, to keep them abreast of what was happening in our work group and our progress throughout the timeline of planning and then implementation. I also used that time to praise my core group and to get extra input and hopefully buy-in from other staff members.</p> <p>The only incentive I was able to provide, was extra paid work hours. I gave them a task and a set amount of hours that I could pay them for the specific task. If they went over those hours, I was unable to compensate. I rewarded their participation though at our staff meetings and praised them and thanked them continuously!</p> <p>My core group and I worked on the timeline of tasks together, as well as what data would need to be collected to determine our successes and “non-successes”. It was very easy to make sure they knew what they were doing, because they were a part of it, every step of the way. Much easier that way!</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>✓ ___ I included an overall narrative of the results of the pilot.</p> <p>✓ ___ I included results based on the end users' evaluation criteria.</p>	<p>Overall we were very pleased with our pilot Math Course. The Pilot Student Group had stellar attendance and no one “stopped out” during the time period. They enjoyed most of the lessons, though some evenings we did have difficulty with internet being down and needing that for the best use of the lesson that evening. Also, several snow days did make the flow of the lessons much harder, especially when needing to remember content from a previous lesson.</p> <p>Our main evaluation criterion was the TABE pre and post. We were hoping to see TABE scores go up atleast 1 level by the end of the 1st pilot session with atleast 80% of the pilot group. We had great success at 65% going up 1 Level on the Math TABE. Not exactly what we wanted but the other pilot students, who did not go up a level, went up within the level they started in.</p> <p>A student survey was also used at the half-way point and at the end of the pilot session. Student’s remained positive throughout both surveys and mentioned that they really enjoyed the lessons and were learning a lot. Many students mentioned that it made learning Math seem a little easier and even more fun. The only negative comments made mention of the issues the Instructor had with loading certain things on the computer for the day’s lesson or a site not opening when it was supposed to. That delay can be frustrating for everyone involved.</p>

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

Checklist	Response
<p>✓ ___ I included a description of specific changes I needed to make before implementing program-wide.</p>	<p>Before we implement the new curriculum program-wide we will need to look at what lesson plans need revised and also what websites, videos and/or other technology need tweaked or replaced. The main instructor also mentioned that we need a plan B for each lesson, so that if the school's Internet is down we still have a solid lesson. Also, it would be useful to have a plan for a "Snow Day" situation. Perhaps we could have our lessons somewhere accessible to the students, maybe Facebook. Our core group will meet again and go through the pros and cons and make revisions before it is implemented program-wide, if that decision is made.</p>

Final Reflection

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

Checklist	Response
<p>✓ ___ I included an overview of what I learned from this project.</p>	<p>I think that the biggest thing I learned from this project is that I need to continue to try pilot programs throughout the coming years. I think as a new coordinator I am afraid often times to try new things for fear of the staff leaving. But, after trying this pilot program I realized that I was trying to go about changes the wrong way before. The more I involve my staff in decisions involving change, the more apt they are to accept the change, even embrace it and promote it to other staff. Why did I not realize this sooner? Either way, I am very thankful for the experience of being a part of LEA. I have learned many gems that have made me a more confident and competent leader within my program. In the beginning I needed to know more than anything that I was not alone in a big ocean. Being with the same group for 2 years, and sharing our fears/frustrations, our failures and our successes have been wonderful and extremely helpful. Even though I had my core work group from my program to aid in the program improvement project, our LEA group helped me tremendously with project ideas and also in changing direction when I needed to. Never be afraid to try something new and to go at it with all your heart would be my biggest gem of all that I am taking with me!</p>