



Teacher innovation Grants

Project title: Osgood Writing Project: Aligning with the Common Core

Submitted by: Lynne Kenny

ID# (for office use only):

Grades involved: First Grade

Students involved: Approximately 100-120 each year

teachers/staff involved: 5 First Grade Classroom Teachers, 1 Special Education Teacher, 1 Reading Specialist

Subject area(s): Writing (cross disciplinary)

Total funding requested: \$5,000.00

Approximately when will the project be conducted? 2012-2013 School year

Please describe your program concept (*if applicable, you may include examples of where a similar type of project has been successfully implemented in other school systems*)

This grant will provide time for training and teacher collaboration so that teachers are able to implement a forward thinking writing program, aligned with Common Core Standards. Teachers will collaborate within and across grade levels in developing curriculum and a logical scope and sequence for K-2. In addition to the release time requested, teachers will work towards these goals on designated early release days throughout the year.

A similar concept of a much greater scope was used in the development of Cohasset's Every Day Math program. Cross grade level teams were released for 8 days in the fall and 8 days in the spring to work with an outside consultant. Through training and in collaboration with the consultant,



teachers created a scope and sequence to incorporate the new strategies learned. Teachers felt that this work completely transformed delivery of the Every Day Math program (for affected grades- 2-5). Strategies, techniques, and different ways of teaching math continue to be used in grade 2-5 classrooms every day, three years later.

What are the goals of the project? What are you trying to teach?

The Osgood Literacy Team has identified the need for more consistency and rigor in writing instruction. As we transition to the Common Core Standards, the need has become more urgent. To accomplish this we need time for training and collaboration to develop consistency of teacher knowledge, use of common language and instructional approaches. A well-defined scope and sequence will also be developed. To ensure that all teachers are included, we are proposing release time during the school day and follow up on early release times.

Resources for in-depth professional development and time to develop curriculum in writing has been limited at the Osgood School. In trying to fill the gap, teachers have initiated training on their own time. Two teacher-led, before school study groups focused on writing were of value in building teacher knowledge for those able to attend. A subgroup of the Osgood Literacy Team has also worked before school and in the summer to develop rubrics to be used K-2. Over the last few years, we have used early release time to test and refine rubrics with grade level teams. These initiatives were not enough to accomplish our goal.

The primary goal of the program is to improve student writing. We have made great gains in meeting goals in reading through various initiatives we have undertaken in the past 7 years. Although writing has been identified as a focus at the Osgood School, we have not made equitable gains in this area. Our core reading program (Reading Street) is aligned to the Common Core and includes a writing component using 6+1 traits. Unfortunately, we have found (along with other users of this program) that there is not adequate instruction to challenge our writers.



Describe what the students will do:

Students at each grade level will receive; well-planned instruction in writing that is consistent across their grade level and is designed to lay the foundation for the next year's writing demands. The writing program will expand to include more cross disciplinary writing and writing for a variety of purposes. Students will spend more time during the day writing.

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Why/how would you consider your project/program to be innovative?

It is innovative because we are trying to get ahead of the Common Core requirements. We are in the process of researching newly developed writing curriculums that have aligned with the common core curriculum. We are also working to ensure that the program will enhance instructional resources in our school (our new reading program, Stem lab, etc.)

In what ways will this project/program enhance the learning of your students?

Students will become more competent as writers. They will gain experience in several types writing (narrative, informational/explanatory and opinion writing).



How will this project/program be incorporated into the on-going curriculum – for your classroom? In other classrooms (e.g., ready-to-go lesson plans)?

The grade level team will work with the outside consultant to develop instructional practices/lesson plans that support a scope and sequence for writing that is aligned with the Common Core Standards and our reading program. Writing in content areas will be aligned with science and social studies curriculum.

Is your project/program collaborative and/or cross-disciplinary in nature? If so, please describe briefly:

It is both. Collaboration between and across grade level teams will be necessary to develop a cohesive scope and sequence. The Common Core Standards for English/Language Arts require that students are literate in content areas (including science, social studies and technical skills). Students must become proficient in writing to persuade, explain and convey real or imagined experience

Is there a global component to your project/program?

There are global components of the Common Core Standards that we will align to. It is a goal to incorporate cross-disciplinary writing in the area of Social Studies.

Is there a community outreach component to the program?

Yes, parents will receive ongoing updates through newsletters and grade level websites. An overview of our writing program will also be shared on Curriculum Nights. Student writing samples will be shared with parents during conference times. The Osgood School Council will be updated on the progress and results of this program.

How will you measure success and impact of the program?



Teachers will keep student portfolios of ongoing, formative assessments and benchmark assessments for each student. Common rubrics will be used to assess student work. Class results of benchmark assessments will be submitted and analyzed to determine success and next steps.

Please outline the estimated costs (by category).

Note: Budget should include a stipend for program development = # hours x teacher stipend rate (currently \$35/hour).

- **Materials/equipment:** \$50
- **Teacher time for development:** \$1400 (5 subs for 3.5 days @\$80 a day)
- **Professional development/outside consultants:** \$3,550
- **Other:**