

Partnering Online Professional Development with Face to Face Focus Groups to Enhance Curriculum and Competency in the Teaching and Learning of Math and Science

A meaningful partnership already exists among the proposed partners, which will continue throughout and beyond the project end dates. OPEN NH is partnered with the Local Educational Support Center Network, providing online professional development courses to New Hampshire Educators. The program is run through the center network. OPEN NH is also partnered with Plymouth State University. Facilitators of OPEN NH courses are considered adjunct faculty of PSU, as graduate credits can be earned for OPEN NH courses through Plymouth State University. OPEN NH also serves the educators who are employed by the districts in New Hampshire, and thus is also a committed partner with every school district in New Hampshire.

Each partner in the project will fulfill a different role in supporting goals and objectives of this project, as well as the greater goals and objectives of the Math/Science Partnership initiative.

Participating districts will be actively involved through both online and face-to-face activities which build a community of practice. Districts will take the responsibility of recruiting math/science teachers to participate in the online professional development courses offered through OPEN NH. Teachers will take quality professional development courses which will increase their content and pedagogical knowledge, promoting the proactive of teaching good math and science. Districts will also be responsible for granting time for teachers to meet face-to-face in focus group cohorts to discuss the impact of these courses with their colleagues, both within their school (intra-district) and with their grade level counterparts from other districts (inter-district). They will also grant release time for teachers, enabling them to participate in these meetings, when necessary, and will organize the intra-district cohort meetings. Districts will be responsible for substitute pay for their teachers attending both the intra-district and inter-district focus group meetings. Districts will be responsible for assigning a lead teacher to facilitate the cohorts of their intra-district focus group meetings.

The proposed action plan of this partnership is designed to provide teachers with opportunities to meet and discuss the implementation of their professional development into action plans, both throughout the grade levels within each district (the intra-district cohort groups) and across each grade level throughout the state (the inter-district cohorts). Each set of cohorts will have a different set out outcomes which they will use to frame their discussions.

Intra-district cohorts will meet to accomplish the following outcomes:

- align district curricula to the new science/math frameworks and GLEs/GSE's through the grade levels
- discuss grade level appropriate techniques for teaching math/science in the classroom, such as the use of inquiry or virtual manipulatives
- share information, methodology, or techniques discussed in their professional development courses
- discuss ways to incorporate "Follow the Child" conditions and initiatives into their schools

Inter-district cohorts will meet to accomplish the following outcomes:

- develop a common set of course competencies for the various math/science courses offered in their respective districts

- develop a set of common experiences that students should have in order to increase their achievement in math/science
- share information, methodology, or techniques discussed in their professional development courses
- share information, methodology, or techniques discussed in their professional development courses
- share the final projects of their professional development courses
- discuss ways to incorporate "Follow the Child" conditions and initiatives into their schools