



2007-2008 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The Grants and Research Office of Intermediate District 287 and Northeast Metro 916, working collaboratively with member districts, will implement research-based educational programs and practices and seek funding for these programs.

The Grants and Research Office will provide services to help member districts:

- identify, plan and implement research-based educational programs and practices;
- seek funding for these research-based educational programs and practices;
- evaluate the implemented research-based educational programs and practices.

Grant Services

- The Grants Assistance & Search Help continued to provide prospect searches and grant writing assistance. A new in-house database was established from the information contained on the Minnesota Council on Foundations funder list, which draws from their Education and Youth categories. This facilitates a search by subject and a resulting report for those who make requests.
- A total of five requests were answered with an average of 12-35 prospects identified in addition to local corporate funders or other suggestions not always contained in the foundation list.
- The GRO department also applied for and received the following awards from:
 - The Center for Applied Research in Education Innovation (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota for a follow-up study on the lasting impact from a grant funded demonstration project using shop class to incorporate instruction on math and reading. Award: \$3,000
 - The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) for a project intensifying the counseling efforts to help freshmen students and faculty plan for post high school education and the steps necessary to achieve it. Award: \$99,309
 - The Minnesota Department of Education State Personnel Development Grants for capacity building to improve outcomes for students in special education. GRO sustained a second grant from this funding source to integrate academics and career and technical education. Award: \$49,300
- In addition to grants received, GRO also submitted proposals to the following funders (still pending at the time of this report):

- The MDE to establish two metro Math and Science Teacher Academy centers to help teachers prepare student to achieve new standards in science and math. Partners in the proposal include Metro ECSU, Hamline University, the University of Minnesota, and Normandale Community College. GRO has received notification the grant is being considered and has been asked to be prepared to send representatives to the May 28 meeting of funded proposals. Request: \$1,567,151
- The Federal Dept. of Education's Foreign Language Acquisition Program (FLAP) for creation of a statewide Minnesota Critical Language Instruction Center (MN-CLIC) that would open access to Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Arabic to all students in the state by delivering courses through a hybrid of online and interactive television instruction. Request: \$1,190,203 over five years.

Research Services

Differentiated Instruction for All (DIAL) Project

- Two exploratory workshops on "Lesson Study to Support Differentiated Instruction" were facilitated by Peter Ziegler.
- Math Lesson Study Pilot Project is underway with 18 participants from four school districts. Staff development for the participants is scheduled and the project will continue throughout the 2008-2009 school year.
- Exemplary programs and resources gathered from other schools and institutions are hot-linked into our website. Hot-links were updated and expanded.
- Differentiated strategies focusing on reading/language arts/English, math, science, and social studies for elementary, junior high/middle school and high school were expanded.
- NWEA MAP Tests Step 3 Workshop: Climbing the Data Ladder workshops were held to increase understanding of how to use data effectively to differentiate instruction.
- NWEA MAP Tests Step 4 Workshop: Growth & Goals: Building Local Expertise is scheduled for October, 2008.
- The Leading for Literacy in the 21st Century workshop was facilitated by Lin Kuzmich for educational leaders.
- The two-level differentiated instruction learning communities program was made available to member districts. No learning communities were in operation during this year.
- The DIAL E-Learning Project was shared at professional conferences.

Scientifically Based Education Research (SciBER) Project

- Scientifically based education researched literacy curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources were updated on the website.
- Scientifically based education researched science, math and social studies curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources were added to the website.
- The Leading for Literacy in the 21st Century workshop was facilitated by Lin Kuzmich for educational leaders.

- Bridging Math and Science Research workshops were scheduled for May with Jim Pellegrino. Due to insufficient registration the workshops were cancelled.
- Explored partnering with the University of Minnesota's "Teacher Professional Development in Understanding the Brain Classroom Neuroscience Curricula Inquiry Pedagogy" project. After further consideration GRO discontinued its involvement in the project.

Personalizing the High School Learning Experience Project

- The High School Reform: Personalizing the Learning Experience 2-day workshop was held August 15-16, 2007. It was led by Joe DiMartino, President of the Center for Secondary School Redesign at Brown University.
- Proposals are being solicited from member districts for the High School Success Emporium scheduled on August 11, 2008.
- Resources from the Personalizing the High School Learning Experience Forum are posted on the website including grant planning materials.
- Expanded resources were added to the website on personalizing the high school learning experience.
- Updates were sent to member districts on the status of funding and the process for applying for U.S. Dept. of Education Smaller Learning Communities grants for the upcoming school year.

Professional Development Experiences

- NWEA MAP Tests Step 3: Climbing the Data Ladder workshops were held for 60 educators.
- The Leading for Literacy in the 21st Century workshop was held for 46 educational leaders.
- The High School Reform: Personalizing the Learning Experience 2-day workshop was held for 45 educators.
- Exploratory workshop on "Lesson Study to Support Differentiated Instruction" was held for 36 educators.
- Math Lesson Study Pilot Project staff development sessions are scheduled for 18 participants.
- The High School Success Emporium is scheduled for August 11, 2008.

Related Joint Projects

The Friday Forum network of gifted education professionals from area districts is sponsored by GRO in cooperation with Metro ECSU. Friday Forum explores effective practice in gifted education. Friday Forum met five times during the year to discuss issues common to the group and be exposed to the products available through GRO that promote gifted education. To date, there are 24 registered members in the Friday Forum Network, representing 20 area educational organizations and districts. In 2007/2008, Friday Forum leaders initiated the Program Improvement Pool (PIP). PIP grew out of a discussion around evaluating district gifted programs using the collective expertise of Friday Forum members. Expense is a considerable barrier to conducting ongoing program improvement. Through the pool, members can help one

another using in-kind contributions of time. Thirteen area school districts are represented in PIP.

Grants and Research Office Operations and Promotion

- The Grants and Research Office Advisory Committee met during the year to provide input and feedback related to GRO initiatives.
- Materials associated with GRO initiatives are frequently distributed at professional meetings and to intermediate district advisory groups.
- The Grants and Research Office promoted its services at the National Association of Gifted Children Conference.
- Five issues of the GRO-o-gram e-newsletter were electronically distributed to over 1700 people. GRO-o-grams announce grant opportunities, updates, and promote workshops sponsored by the Grants and Research Office, Minnesota Department of Education, and others. Format changes introduced this year made it easier to scan content related to professional development and grants information. Each issue contains a grant profile. (GRO-o-grams from the past three years are available on the GRO web site).

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