



2009-2010 Annual Report

GRO is a dynamic and successful partnership between two Minnesota intermediate school districts. Intermediate districts partner with K-12 school districts to meet more effectively the unique learning needs of every student. In order to achieve this mission, GRO helps districts obtain resources, share effective practice, and stay on the cutting edge of educational research.

***Applying Research to Practice** – a resource for best practice applications of research-based teaching and learning, including 1) Differentiated Instruction 2) Secondary School Re-Design and 3) Evidence Based Education.*

***Grant Seeking Assistance** – a resource for GRO member districts and their staffs to write proposals and research funding prospects for projects they seek to fund.*

***Professional Learning Opportunities** – a resource for professional development offered by 287/916 such as training events, seminars and workshops, on-line learning, and idea sharing in repositories for curricula and what other districts are doing.*

Applying Research to Practice

Differentiated Instruction for All (DIAL) Project

- Exemplary programs and resources gathered from other schools and institutions are hot-linked to the website 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.
- The DIAL E-Learning Community course was included in the Hamline University catalog in the fall of 2009. Six participants were registered for the Winter 2010 semester.

Evidence Based Education Research Project

- Evidence based education researched literacy curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources were expanded on the website.
- Evidence based education researched science, math and social studies curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources were expanded on the website.
- Jim Pellegrino facilitated a workshop entitled Intensified Algebra: Interventions for Helping Students Over the Basic Algebra Threshold on June 16, 2009.
- Lin Kuzmich facilitated a workshop entitled Gap Closing Instruction in Literacy: What Works? on April 20, 2010.

Secondary School Redesign Project

- At the High School Success Emporium II held in June, 2009, high school redesign success stories were shared by teams from:
 - Eden Prairie High School: *Jing, Smartboards, & Moodle - Tipping Points in Technology Integration*
 - Mahtomedi Public Schools: *Mahtomedi Engineering Leadership Program*
 - Minnetonka High School: *Embedded Health Model-Move from Traditional to Whole Student Support*
 - Richfield High School: *Teacher Leadership Development*
 - Robbinsdale Armstrong High School and Plymouth Middle School: *Raised Academic Achievement – Advanced Placement*
 - Rochester Century High School: *One Student and One Staff Member at a Time*
- Resources from the High School Success Emporium II are posted on the website.
- High School Success Emporium III is being sponsored in collaboration with the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals and is scheduled for June 23, 2010. Sessions will include:
 - Century High School and Mayo Clinic, Rochester: *Mayo Clinic Partnership for Student and Teacher Learning-STEEP (Student & Teacher Education Enhancement Program)*
 - Intermediate District 287, Plymouth: *Serving Millennials in Times of White Water Change*
 - Lakeville South High School: *STEM: Inquiry, Connections, Redesign*
 - Minnetonka High School: *Building Leadership Capacity*
 - Minnetonka High School: *Embedded Health Model-Move from Traditional to Whole Student Support*
 - Shakopee High School: *Dual Language Students Need Support-What They Don't Know They Don't Know*
- Middle School Success Emporium I is being sponsored in collaboration with the Minnesota Middle School Association and the Minnesota Association of Secondary Principals and is scheduled for June 22, 2010. Sessions will include:
 - New London-Spicer Middle School: *Breaking Ranks in the Middle, A Practical Approach*
 - Oak Grove Middle School, Bloomington: *Professional Learning Communities at the Middle Level*

- Olson Middle School, Bloomington: *Implementing a STEM Way of Thinking*
- Pioneer Ridge Middle School, Chaska: *A New View from the Middle*
- Roseville Area Middle School: *Risk Takers on the Move*
- Valley View Middle School, Bloomington: *A Renaissance*
- Westwood Middle School, Spring Lake Park: *Maximizing the Middle*
- Expanded secondary school redesign resources were added to the website.

Grantseeking Assistance

- The Grant Search Help Request Form was reinstated on the website in March, 2010. No requests for assistance have been received to date this year.

Grants

- MSTP
The Math and Science Teacher Partnership (Region 11) has provided professional development for elementary and secondary teachers in metro districts. The focus this year has been on Grades 3-6: Algebrafication (17 districts, 208 teachers), and Secondary STEM/Engineering (8 districts, 79 teachers).
Funding period: July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010
Amount received: \$610,043
- CAREI: PLC Sustainability Project
This CAREI (Center for Applied Research & Education Improvement) funded project investigated whether the Region 11 MSTA PLCs from the 2008-09 school year continued after the training ended. It also examined conditions that allowed or prohibited PLC sustainability.
Funding period: March, 2010 – December, 2010
Amount awarded: \$4000
- ACE V (Academics in Career Education)
Improving Academic Achievement for EBD Students through Career and Technology Training Programs - FY10 Computer Applications (MS Office)
Funding period: January, 2010 – January, 2011
Amount awarded: \$24,947
- ACE VI (Academics in Career Education) Application submitted 3/31/2010
Improving Academic Achievement for EBD Students through Career and Technology Training Programs – extending current ACE projects to additional sites.
Proposed funding period: June, 2010 – January, 2011
Proposal amount: \$49,930
- Transforming School Counseling

This program had two goals: (1) train and coach staff members to effectively counsel students to access post-secondary education and (2) enhance existing structures for supporting 80 first year high school students attending four area learning center programs.

Funding period: April 2008 – June 30, 2009 Amount received: \$99,309. Remaining funds were used to send six staff (3 from each intermediate) to AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) training in January, 2010.

- Alternatives to Suspension
Grant dollars have been used to create a comprehensive program of support for reducing suspensions based on the Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) model.
Funding period: July, 2009 – June 30, 2010 (possibility of continuation)
Amount received: \$19,756.00.

Professional Learning Opportunities

- High School Success Emporium II was held for 35 participants.
- High School Success Emporium III is scheduled is scheduled for June 23, 2010.
- Middle School Success Emporium I is scheduled for June 22, 2010.
- A workshop entitled Intensified Algebra: Interventions for Helping Students over the Basic Algebra Threshold was held for 40 participants.
- A workshop entitled “Gap Closing Instruction in Literacy: What Works?” was held for 45 participants.
- The Friday Forum network continued:
 - The Friday Forum network of gifted education professionals from area districts is sponsored by GRO in cooperation with Metro ECSU. Friday Forum met five times during the year to discuss effective practice in gifted education and other issues common to the group. In 2009-2010, there are 25 registered members in the Friday Forum Network, representing 21 area educational organizations and districts.
Examples of Friday Forum initiatives include:
 - Continued work on designing the **Middle School Student Career Commons**. The Career Commons is envisioned as an online clearinghouse where information can be accessed at the middle school level. Northern Star Online is funding 2 staff to coordinate and develop the MSSCC.
 - Posting of RTI support documents on the GRO website.

Grants and Research Office Communications

- Issues of the GRO-o-gram e-newsletter were electronically distributed to over 1800 people.
- A Grants and Research Office PowerPoint slide show was added to the website for use in providing member districts an overview services.
- *Your Opinion Counts!* was added to the GRO-o-gram to provide an opportunity for readers to share their ideas about significant educational issues. Questions include:
 - Should end-of-course assessments substitute for MCA-II tests?
 - Is there a sense of urgency in your school district for elementary science staff development? Why? or Why Not?

- Do you support the movement to national common core standards? Why? or Why Not?
- A significant revamping of the website has resulted in:
 - Curriculum review process resources and resources for evaluating curricular areas have been expanded.
 - Professional Learning Community resources have been expanded.
 - A Curriculum Repository continues to be a feature of the website. A process for soliciting exemplary curriculum, assessment, and instructional procedures, practices, programs, policies and projects for addition to the website has been shared with district leadership.
 - Quick Links to Professional Development has been revised. Included within the quick links are the Teaching and Learning Leadership ShareSite, Professional Learning, and Gifted Education Friday Forum.
 - The Teaching and Learning Leadership ShareSite includes:
 - Curriculum Repository
 - Curriculum Practices Clearinghouse
 - College Level Examination Program
 - Curriculum Review Process Resources
 - Resources for Evaluating Curricular Areas
 - The Professional Learning section includes:
 - PLC Resources
 - Workshops
 - E-Learning Community
 - Region 11 Math and Science Teacher Center
 - Gifted Education Friday Forum
- Materials associated with GRO initiatives are frequently distributed at professional meetings and to intermediate district advisory groups.

Compiled by:

Jane Holmberg, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning - Intermediate District 287

Jessica Wiley, Director of Educational Services - Northeast Metro 916

Duane Udstuen, Applying Research to Practice Consultant

Barbara Wojcik, GRO Administrative Assistant