



2012-2013 Annual Report

The Grants and Research Office (GRO) is a dynamic and successful partnership between Intermediate District 287 and Northeast Metro 916. These intermediate districts partner with their member K-12 school districts to meet more effectively the unique learning needs of every student. In order to achieve this mission, GRO helps districts stay on the cutting edge of educational research, share effective practice and learn from successful grants.

Applying Research to Practice – a resource for best practice applications of research based teaching and learning, including 1) Differentiated Instruction; 2) Secondary School Redesign; 3) Evidence Based Education and 4) Learnings from Grants.

Grant Seeking Resources – 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.
- The DIAL E-Learning Community courses were included in the Hamline University catalog. The two foundation courses are offered through Hamline on a semi-annual basis.
- Differentiated strategies focusing on reading/language arts/English, math, science, and social studies for elementary, junior high/middle school and high school are provided.
- All the online resources for differentiation were evaluated and updated.
- Allyson Burnett and Rhonda Mason facilitated a workshop entitled 6-12 Literacy: Differentiation for Struggling Students.
 - *The overall goal of this workshop was to increase each participant's ability to meet the expectations of the Common Core and Career and College Readiness Anchor Standards for English Language Arts and Content Literacy for ELL, Special Education, and struggling students by focusing on specific ways to differentiate and scaffold instruction.*
- Rhonda Mason facilitated a workshop entitled Instructional Strategies to Differentiate Learning for Struggling Students
 - *This workshop will build on some of the strategies first introduced at the April Grants and Research workshop, 6-12 Literacy: Differentiation for Struggling Student.*

Secondary School Redesign Project

- Resources from the Secondary Academic Showcase, 2012 were added to the website.
- Secondary school redesign resources to enhance academic rigor on the website were evaluated and updated.
- Explored methods to enhance academic rigor. Workshops are being considered related to this topic for the next school year.

Evidence Based Education Research Project

- Evidence based education research literacy curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources on the website were evaluated and updated.
- Evidence based education research science, math and social studies curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources on the website were evaluated and updated.
- Online math and reading interventions resources were evaluated and updated.
- Jon Voss and a team of educators facilitated a workshop entitled Developing an Online Program for Your District: Claiming Your Place in the Digital Future for educators.
 - *This day-long workshop was facilitated for a team of district or school leaders to learn about the most important facets of developing or expanding an online program. Participants worked with their team and the facilitators on how their local needs would inform their plan for online learning.*
- Jon Voss and Scott Schwister facilitated the four part Online Learning Leadership Network 2012-2013.
 - *The network was a supportive community of colleagues who shared ideas and resources, participated in collaborative problem-solving, and developed strategies to implement online learning opportunities in their setting. Participants networked with other district leaders and teams, and engaged in focused small group conversations around special interest topics. Participants worked with network members and facilitators to design and develop projects that met next-phase implementation needs in their district.*
- Allyson Burnett facilitated a literacy workshop entitled Using the New English Language Arts Standards to Build Content Rigor, Grades 6–12. This workshop is scheduled again in November, 2013.
 - *The overall goal of this workshop was to increase a team’s ability to respond to the expectations of the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for English Language Arts and Content Literacy, with a focus on specific strategies that “show students how” to read and process at the rigorous levels required by the standards.*
- Examined gender equitable educational practices and provided appropriate application resources. Workshops on this topic are being considered for the next school year.
- Explored instructional strategies for increasing student engagement in the learning process. Workshops on this topic are being considered for the next school year.
- Explored digital-based learning experiences and their application for 21st century skills development. Workshops on this topic are being considered for the next school year.

Learnings from Grants

- The Learnings from Grants section was added to the website to share significant outcomes of grants received. Included are:

- Math and Science Teacher Academy Partnership
- ACE V (Academics in Career Education)
- Alternatives to Suspension
- CAREI: PLC Sustainability Project
- Transforming School Counseling
- ACE: Improving Academic Achievement for EBD Students through Career and Technology Training Program

Grant Seeking Resources

- The Grants section of the website was completely redesigned to provide greater accessibility and applicability for users.
- All online grant seeking resources were evaluated and updated.
- Monitored the US Department of Education Grants and the MDE Contract Registry.
- Grants attained include:
 - Continuation of the Region 11 Math and Science Teacher Partnership Academy: Physical Science Grade 9, and Math Reasoning Grades 3-5.
 - Partnering with the University of Minnesota and Metro ECSU to administer the EngrTEAMS - Engineering to Advance the Education of Analysis, Measurement, and Science; a NSF (National Science Foundation) grant, \$8 million over a 5 year period. School district partners are North St. Paul, St. Paul, and South Washington County.

Professional Learning Opportunities

- Developing an Online Program for Your District: Claiming Your Place in the Digital Future was facilitated for a total of 40 participants
- The Online Learning Leadership Network 2012-2013 served 23 participants through four sessions.
- Using the New English Language Arts Standards to Build Content Rigor, Grades 6–12 was facilitated for 66 participants.
- 6-12 Literacy: Differentiation for Struggling Students was facilitated for 88 participants.
- Instructional Strategies to Differentiate Learning for Struggling Students was facilitated for 36 participants.
- Workshop opportunities that could be presented in collaboration with Solution Tree were examined.
- The Friday Forum network continued with bi-monthly meetings. Current membership: 19 paid members.

Grants and Research Office Communications

- The GRO-o-gram e-newsletter was electronically distributed to over 1200 people. The distribution list is compiled from member district administrators, GRO workshop participants, and those requesting to be included on all updates.

- Evaluated the structure of the GRO website and reorganized it to be in alignment with the current functions of GRO.
- Explored options for using social networking to promote GRO and added Facebook and Twitter to the webpage to make it more dynamic.
- *Your Opinion Counts!* As part of the GRO-o-gram, this online survey feature continued to provide an opportunity for readers to share their ideas about significant educational issues.
- Evaluated and updated curriculum review process resources and resources for evaluating curricular areas provided on the website.
- Evaluated and updated Professional Learning Community resources provided on the website.
- Evaluated and updated the Curriculum Repository on the website. A process for soliciting exemplary curriculum, assessment, and instructional procedures, practices, programs, policies and projects from district leadership is in place.
- Materials associated with GRO initiatives are frequently distributed at professional meetings and to intermediate district advisory groups.

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