



THE BEACON

State Personnel Development Grant Goal 2, Reading & Math



ADE/ESS

Fall 2008

A Simple Solution

The Council for Exceptional Children recently released an article by Richard Elmore titled: "Why Some Schools Improve and Others Don't." Richard is a professor at Harvard University in the graduate school of education. He takes an in-depth look at the importance of collaboration among teachers in determining the success or failure of school improvement.

Elmore directly attacks the magic bullet theory. He emphasizes that no curriculum or other outside resource can institute systemic change within a school without intensive collaboration among all personnel.

One of the major problems he cites throughout the article deals with the lack of communication between general and special education teachers. The two entities often live in two separate worlds. Teaching has too often consisted of a closed door session where no transfer of information or ideas takes place. The result of this is that children do not achieve to their highest potential.

The problem may manifest itself in the lack of understanding the roles of each individual within the school. Special education teachers often feel that other teachers are not privy to the specialized training needed to properly service students with disabilities, while general education teachers may feel overwhelmed with the added responsibilities of administering to the needs of students with exceptionalities.

The simple solution boils down to the utilization of resources. The same is true in our schools. We must learn to utilize all of our resources to insure each child receives the best possible education we can provide for them. The process is not about individual adults but about the betterment of children.

www.cec.sped.org

SCRAMBLING FOR PROFICIENCY

With the mandate of high-stakes testing, schools across the country are scrambling to bring students to proficiency. The majority of schools are seeing progress moving students up to a level of proficiency. However, a growing trend shows that students, who are at proficiency, are not moving to the excelling category as rapidly. Unfortunately, to meet federal mandates all students must progress. The problem gives us an excellent opportunity to address enrichment. This is an area often overlooked. Enrichment is much like any other intervention. Once again we simply give students what they need. This is just "good teaching". The key to enrichment, as with any intervention, is the element of individualizing instruction to fit the needs of all children.

Guess the Beacon School



Got Tan?

We love our beach,
now where's the water?

Some of our classes have gone to the dogs.

We have sand and Marines, but this is no Iwo Jima!

Only at our school can you have lunch with the Queen on your birthday!

Email your guess to charles.bertram@azed.gov
The first correct guess wins!!!!



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Response to Intervention

A recent article was published by the Florida Center for Reading Research. Joseph K. Torgesen writes about the significant difference between the Response To Intervention (RTI) approach to identification of students with learning disabilities and the RTI instructional model. He emphasizes the importance of understanding that the RTI approach to identification was developed in order to insure students who are recommended for special education services as learning disabled are not simply the victims of poor or inadequate instruction, while the RTI model is simply a means of providing intervention supports for struggling readers. <http://www.fcrr.org>



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Southwest Regional Meeting 8/19/2008 Desert Mesa
- Southern Regional Meeting 8/25/2008 C.E. Rose Valley
- Northern Regional Meeting 9/03/2008 Flora Thew
- Northern Regional Meeting 9/23/2008 J.Q. Thomas
- SPDG Goal II Partner Meeting/coaching: November 6-7, 2008

Resources

- <http://www.fcrr.org/>
- <http://mathforum.org/>
- <http://www.interventioncentral.org/>

Quote: Anyone can steer the ship when the sea is calm."

-- Publilius Syrus



Math to the Rescue

When mastering number fluency, there are many factors to be considered. Automaticity is the most common when exhibiting mastery of number facts. However, efficiency, accuracy, and flexibility are also vital in demonstrating number fact mastery.

Reading Adventures



One of the biggest problems we face when teaching students to read is insuring they adequately comprehend what they are reading. Many times students can read with speed and fluency; however they may not be able to comprehend what they have read. Graphic organizers can be a valuable tool in teaching comprehension. www.graphic.org is one resource with graphic organizers.

IN THE NEWS!!

The following is an excerpt taken from the East Valley Tribune. March 16, 2008.

"Fire tore through a portable classroom used by a Mesa charter school late Sunday night."

The fire destroyed many of the school's records. The staff has worked countless hours to restore records and prepare for the return of students this fall. Recently, the new building was set while staff attended a coach's training. Dedicated individuals can be stalled but never stopped.

Obviously, the arsonists underestimated the resolve of Sue Douglas, her staff, and her students, who are still **"going to college!!!!"**

