

Great Teaching and Leading Fund FY17 Annual Report

*A Collaborative Pyramid Supporting Professional Development, Teacher
Leadership and Teacher Retention*

Submitted by:

Linda F. Quinn & Lois Parette

University of Nevada-Las Vegas

Clark County School District

Sierra Nevada College

National University

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Summary

A Collaborative Pyramid Supporting Professional Development, Teacher Leadership and Teacher Retention

Goals/Objectives:

- To Increase the retention rate of teachers in Nevada
 - One hundred teachers who began their teaching careers in Nevada in August 2016, were recruited from teacher licensure programs at UNLV, SNC, NU and CCSD. Through a series of seminars, focus groups, and online communication the teachers experienced timely and critical support on current classroom issues and instruction.
- To train teacher leaders to support first-year teachers
 - Twenty experienced teachers were recruited to serve as teacher leaders for the first-year teachers. These teacher leaders received ideas in mentoring and coaching from university faculty. Each teacher leader was assigned a small cohort of first-year teachers to support. The support was in the form of face-to-face small group and individual meetings, and web-based observations of practice.
- To create communities of teacher learners
 - First-year teachers and teacher leaders who had placements in similar schools were able to visit one another's classrooms to observe and reflect on teaching practices.
- To establish a process for inducting first-year teachers into the profession who will ultimately become effective educators and teacher leaders of the future.
 - During ongoing attention to their professional practice by teacher leaders, and college faculty, first-year teachers experienced professional growth. Many of the first-year teachers chose to remain as teachers and continue their professional growth.
- To measure the success of the program
 - Measurement of the success of the program took place through collection of data from questionnaires directed toward perceptions of professional growth by participants. Before the start of the project and following each seminar, participants responded to survey questions through a QUALTRICS survey. Teacher leaders provided follow-up data on program success through surveys and conversations with coordinators. Grant coordinators of program activities met bi-weekly to discuss program progress. An ultimate measure of the program will be the retention rate of the participants over a five-year period.

Abstract and Results Overview

New teacher and teacher leader participants for this project were recruited through the teacher preparation programs (TTP) at five institutions (Clark County School District, National University, Sierra College of Nevada, and University of Nevada, Las Vegas). Coordinators for each of the representative institutions met bi-monthly to plan seminars and to review survey data. Small learning community groups were formed with up to eight first-year teachers with a teacher leader who currently shared similar grade levels or content area. Seventy-six first-year teachers and 17 teacher leaders completed the project.

The implementation of the project met with high interest. Participants viewed their involvement in the project as valuable and wanted to continue dialogue among teachers. The focus on the professional development of new teachers, teacher leadership and teacher retention emerging from this program appears to meet the professional needs of teachers at all levels. The non-evaluative approach to improving teaching practice was embraced by the new teachers who were free to admit mistakes and ask meaningful questions without the fear of retribution from supervisors. The one part of this project that was limited by the amount of funds awarded was the time to visit one another's classrooms for real-time evidence of exemplary teaching by teacher leaders and the coaching of new teachers in their respective classrooms.

Next Steps

Additional funds will be requested from the Nevada Department of Education for continuation of this project. The design of a credit level course to continue support of new teachers is being considered.

Grant Funded Activities

First Saturday Seminar

- a) An initial Saturday morning seminar was held on December 3, 2016 (Hendrix Auditorium on the UNLV campus). First-year teachers met with their teacher leaders in small groups. All attendees were informed of the requirements for participation in the program. A representative from the Acclaim Program demonstrated ways participants could easily record, upload, organize, and securely collaborate on media files in and out of the classroom from any device. Each participant was provided with a license to access Acclaim and become part of a small group of educators for the purpose of exchanging videos of teaching.
- b) One hundred first-year teachers and 21 teacher leaders attended this initial seminar.
- c) Effectiveness in assisting teachers was documented through results of a Qualtrics Survey
- d) Participants responded to questions pertaining to their personal interest in participating in the program, topics that helped them with current concerns and ideas that they took from their small group exchanges to implement in their practice. Throughout the project participants were also able to share digital recordings of their practice and to receive constructive comments from their peers and the teacher leaders of their groups.
- e) In the future, it is anticipated that participants will become more comfortable using the Acclaim digital platform for sharing and improving teaching practice.
- f) See Attachment A for the agenda for all seminars, and results from the Qualtrics surveys.

Second Saturday Seminar

- a) During the second seminar on January 21, 2017 at West Tech Academy in CCSD, the teacher leaders met with Linda Quinn to exchange thoughts and ideas, and provide feedback on the progress of their groups. Two representatives from National University provided information to the first-year teachers. One presentation was on the Harmony Program (participants were given Harmony resource packets). The other presentation was on classroom management strategies and participants were provided with a list of online resources to support them in classroom management. First-year teachers and teacher leaders met in small groups. Participants completed a Qualtrics survey at the end of the second seminar.
- b) Eighty first-year teachers and 17 teacher leaders attended the second Saturday seminar.
- c) Effectiveness in assisting teachers was documented through results of a Qualtrics Survey
- d) Participants responded to questions pertaining to their personal interest in participating in the program, topics that helped them with current concerns and ideas that they took from their small group exchanges to implement in their practice. Throughout the project participants were also able to share digital recordings of their practice and to receive constructive comments from their peers and the teacher leaders of their groups.
- e) In the future, it is anticipated that participants will become more comfortable using the Acclaim digital platform for sharing and improving teaching practice.
- f) See Attachment A for the agenda for all seminars, and results from the Qualtrics surveys.

Third Saturday Seminar

- a) A third seminar held on March 4, at Del Sol Academy in CCSD, consisted of round table sessions conducted by the teacher leaders and attended by the first-year teachers. All participants completed a Qualtrics survey and experienced teachers responded to a survey regarding their role as teacher leaders in the project. Linda Quinn talked to the group about what it means to be a reflective practitioner.
- b) Eighty first-year teachers and 17 teacher leaders attended this third Saturday Seminar.
- c) Effectiveness in assisting teachers was documented through results of a Qualtrics Survey
- d) Participants responded to questions pertaining to their personal interest in participating in the program, topics that helped them with current concerns and ideas that they took from their small group exchanges to implement in their practice. Throughout the project participants were also able to share digital recordings of their practice and to receive constructive comments from their peers and the teacher leaders of their groups.
- e) In the future, it is anticipated that participants will become more comfortable using the Acclaim digital platform for sharing and improving teaching practice.
- f) See Attachment A for the agenda for all seminars, and results from the Qualtrics surveys.

Additional Meetings

In April, 10 of the teacher leaders met with 34 of their small group members and first-year teachers from other groups. These groups met in various locations (schools, coffee shops, restaurants) and at times convenient to the participants. Discussion topics ranged from ending the school year, to preparing for the next year, to classroom management strategies, to planning with multiple media and to report cards. The teacher leaders reported their meeting times, topics and attendees to Linda Quinn.

Budget Summary

Participants in the program, first-year teachers and teacher leaders were awarded a stipend for attending all three Saturday seminars, communicating bi-monthly with members in their small groups and posting videos of their teaching practice through the Acclaim digital recording website. Each participant received a license for the on-line platform for posting their videos. Project coordinators from each of the institutions involved also received a stipend. The PI and the Co-PI received salaries for writing, implementing and organizing grant activities. A student assistant received an hourly wage for analyzing data.

The initial GTLF grant request was for \$653,037.56. Funds awarded were \$200,300.00. Because of this reduction in funds, opportunities for observations and class visits were eliminated from the grant. Funds were distributed for salaries, benefits, licenses for web-based activities, books and periodicals and general supplies. A copy of the revised budget and the narrative can be viewed in Appendix B. Some funds had to be returned as the invoice for the textbooks that had been ordered for all of the participants arrived after the June 30 ending date for the grant. Also, funds to be distributed to the PI and Co-PI were held up in processing and had to be returned to the NDE. Light refreshments for each of the seminars were provided by the Department of Teaching and Learning at UNLV, National University, and by Linda Quinn

Appendix A-Seminar Agenda and Qualtrics Summary

All meeting locations and requirements for participation in the project are ADA compliant.

Seminar Agenda---December 3, 2016

Meeting Location, Hendrix Auditorium, UNLV Campus

We look forward to meeting you this Saturday. In order for you to prepare for a successful day please do the following:

- Please download and complete a W9 US. Tax form, bring it to the seminar, and hand it to Linda Quinn directly.
- Bring a signed copy of your "Agreement to Participate" letter. If you do not have one, you will be asked to sign one as you check in for the seminar.

8:00-8:45--Teacher Leaders meet with Linda Quinn

9:00-9:15--Orientation to the project and housekeeping, Introduction of Project Coordinators Monte Bay, Patricia Cooper, Lois Paretti, Linda Quinn, Jennifer Varrato.

9:15-10:00--Intro presentations by Teacher Leaders 10:00-10:15--break

10:15-10:45--Introduction to Acclaim by Aksel Gungor 10:45-11:15--Intro presentations by Teacher Leaders

11:15-12:00--Meet in small groups, exchange contact information, plan next steps

12:00 Adjourn. The project coordinators will be around to answer individual questions until 12:15.

See Attachments

Acclaim for videotaping your teaching

Teacher Tip Sheets from the Teacher Leaders who will be introducing themselves during the seminar.

Seminar Agenda---January 21, 2017

Meeting Location, West Career &Tech Academy, 11945 W Charleston, LV 89132

We look forward to meeting you again.

- Sign in! If the sign-in sheet indicates you are missing either an acceptance letter or a W- 9 form please complete them (forms available by the sign-in sheet) and return them to one of the seminar coordinators. (Monte Bay, Patricia Cooper, Lois Paretti, Linda Quinn, Jennifer Varrato)
- 9:00-9:10—Welcome
 - Q & A regarding Acclaim. Note-the emails for these teachers bounced back when Aksel sent the invitation to join Acclaim. If you know these teachers please remind them of the seminar and remind them to provide their correct email when they sign in on Saturday. (Heather Locke, Ewa Mar, David Rudder, Shane Gibson, Christy Velez-Noble, and Kenneth Ward)
 - Harmony Kit explanation and distribution
- 9:10-10:00--
 - Elementary teachers meet with Sue Hendricks on Sanford Harmony kits, Secondary teachers meet with WCTA Teacher
 - Teacher Leaders meet with Dr. Quinn
- 10:00-10:15—break
- 10:15-10:45-Interactive Presentation by Dr. Grandy on Classroom Management
- 10:45-11:30-Teacher Leader led group meetings
- 11:30-11:50--Groups share one or two best ideas
- 11:50-12:00-Closing remarks, and response to on-line survey
- 12:00 Adjourn. The coordinators will be around to answer questions until 12:15

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Seminar 3: March 4, 2017.

Seminar location: Del Sol Academy High School at 3100 E Patrick Ln Las Vegas, NV 89120

Seminar Agenda---March 4, 2017

The seminar will begin at 9:00. Please arrive in time to sign in, find your assigned tables.

Welcome and announcements: 9:00-9:15 (On Reflection and using Acclaim)

Round Table Session 1 9:15-10:00

Break 10:00-10:15

Round Table Session II 10:15-11:00

Final face-to-face small group meetings with mentor teachers: 11:05-11:50

11:50-12:00: Teaching as Reflective Practice, Linda Quinn

12:00: Closure and response to survey

Should you have any questions please contact me through email or at 702-845-1321

Qualtrics Survey Summary 6.21.17

- **What is your primary motivation for participating in this project?**
 - Overwhelming reason to participate was to learn (to be a better teacher, grow practice, etc.), followed by the desire to support other teachers (usually teacher leaders) or collaborate with other teachers (usually first year teachers), networking (which could be added to collaboration) was low across the board. Money and fulfilling a requirement appeared on all three surveys, but was relatively low compared to the other reasons.

- ***What is one idea from the seminar that you plan to use in your classroom?***
 - Ideas taken from the seminar fell into two categories: strategies and resources. Strategies ranged from direct instructional teaching strategies to strategies for classroom management and student engagement. Resources were a range of technology-based (web or apps) or tangible resources that could be implemented right away. Knowing what each teacher gained from the session would depend on the personal context and experience of the teacher.

- ***In what ways were the exchanges in your small group beneficial to you?***
 - After review, small group collaboration appears to be a very beneficial use of time, something that almost every person appreciated. The responses ranged from the sharing of resources, the ability to ask questions openly in a safe environment. The responses also included positive words such as support, collaboration and respect. On a couple of occasions the response asked for more time to be spent in small group discussion.

- ***Suggest something that you would like to see included or addressed in future seminars***
 - The group responses for suggestions for future seminars fit into one of the following categories: strategies, resources, content specific, and time. Strategy answers were related to teachers wanting to learn more ways to accomplish certain classroom goals such as management or lesson planning. Resource answers were related to people hoping to see more in terms of technology or tangible ideas that could be easily implemented into the classroom. Several teachers also mentioned content specific answers - a desire to focus more on one area (special education, ELA, growth plans, etc.). Finally, several answers were related to how the time was spent during the seminar - ex. more time in small groups, less time doing xyz.

- ***Please rate the usefulness, benefit or relevance of the seminar to you as a teacher by checking one of the choices below (graph)***
 - Overall - the consensus was that the seminar was useful (63, 65, 61). Somewhat useful also stayed consistent (7, 11, 9) and not useful responses gradually increased (0,1,2), but not by much.

- ***If the UNLV department of Teaching and Learning offered a course this summer designed to enhance your professional development, would you be interested?***
 - 86.11% Yes (62), 13.89% No (10) (question only included on the third and final survey)