

EDU 846 Facilitative Leadership – Syllabus

July 9-13, 2012 – Eliot Pierson Children’s Center, 105 College Ave., Medford, MA

July 16-20 – Boston Plan for Excellence, 27 Wormwood St. Boston, MA

July 23-27 – Public Schools of Brookline, 333 Washington St., Brookline, MA

Objectives of the Course:

The purpose of the “Facilitative Leadership” course ensures that teachers have a solid understanding of adult learning principles and can use that foundation to help their peers strengthen their instructional practice as they simultaneously work on their own practice. The secondary goal of this work is to support teachers to find greater satisfaction in the teacher leadership roles they hold, opportunities that offer advancement but do not lead them out of the classroom.

The course content has been organized around five broad competencies:

Facilitative Leadership Competencies

1. Understanding Educators as Adult Learners

- Supporting adult learners to take responsibility for their own learning
- Creating a safe place to challenge thinking and encourage reflection
- Discovering and building on what adult learners bring
- Knowing yourself as a learner

2. Facilitating growth-oriented dialogue on curriculum, instruction and assessment

- Establishing and maintaining a focus on improving student learning
- Using data to generate constructive conversations about curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Studying and learning from student work to generate constructive conversations
- Facilitating growth via feedback
- Facilitating growth by making practice public and engaging in reflective dialogue

3. Observing and Analyzing Instruction

- Identifying and maintaining a clear purpose for the observation
- Selecting (or developing) a framework to guide analysis
- Selecting appropriate protocols for observation/debriefing
- Taking low-inference notes to gather observation data on instruction
- Identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement

4. Planning and implementing effective professional learning experiences

- Cultivating a collaborative professional learning community
- Employing principles of effective pedagogy for adult learners
- Monitoring the quality and impact of professional learning

Course Requirements:

This three-credit course requires 36 contact hours and independent reading, research, writing, product development, and reflection outside of the course sessions. During the course the teacher leaders will work together and individually to:

- Build the knowledge required for accomplished practice of each competency
- Perform exercises or tasks that help them to develop and practice each competency

- Make connections to related skills and dispositions and to their shared teacher leadership role

Essential Question:

How do I engage in and facilitate adult dialogue and collaboration that results in higher levels of learning for all students, and especially, for those students who are struggling?

Sub-Questions:

- What is the role of risk-taking in adult learning?
- How do adult collaboration, reflective discourse, and de-privatized practice support effective instruction and high student achievement?

Working Hypothesis:

The achievement of educational equity and excellence requires educators to be engaged in a learning community that:

- Holds them accountable for continually improving their practice for the benefit of their students;
- Engages in public, collaborative assessment of student and adult work;
- Learns in ways that challenge each other's assumptions about educational excellence and equity, and reduce the gap between beliefs and practices.

In learning communities that are transformational, educators persistently and intentionally question one another's practice in a challenging and supportive environment of respect, trust, and learning. To this end, educators...

- Work with determination to ensure equal access to quality learning in a way that achieves equitable outcomes for each student;
- Strive to know students well and to engage them in relevant, meaningful, and demanding work that will make a difference in their lives and communities;
- Commit to become culturally proficient practitioners.

The following will be required of participating teachers:

- Demonstrate understanding of educators as adult learners
- Observe and analyze student work and classroom instruction
- Make practice public for feedback from colleagues; use feedback to engage in a cycle of inquiry
- Provide growth-oriented feedback on student work and teaching strategies to colleagues
- Evaluate and adapt instructional resources
- Plan and implement an effective professional learning experience

Required Texts:

- Allen & Blythe. (2004) *Facilitators' Book of Questions*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Blythe, Allen and Schieffelin (2007) *Looking Together at Student Work*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- School Reform Initiative, *Resource and Protocol Book*.

Additional References and Recommended Resources (course readings are drawn from this list):

- Amulya, Joy. *What is Reflective Practice?* Center for Reflective Community Practice, MIT.
- Bambino, D. (2002). *Critical Friends*. Educational Leadership.
- Breidenstein, A., Fahey, K, Hensley, F. (2012), *Leading for Learning*, Teachers College Press.
- Daniels Tatum, Beverly (2008). [Can We Talk About Race?](#)

- Darling-Hammond, L. (2009). *How teachers learn*. Educational Leadership.
- Drago-Severson, E. (2008). *Four Pillars of Learning*. Journal of Staff Development.
- Dunne, F., Nave, B and Lewis, A. (2000). *Critical Friends Groups: Teachers Helping Teachers to Improve Student Learning*, Phi Delta Kappan Research Bulletin, December 2000
- Easton, L. B. (2004). *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
- Easton Brown, L. (2008). *From professional development to professional learning*, Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 89, No. 10, June 2008, pp. 755-759,761.
- Fahey, K. (2012). *Where Principals Dare to Dream*. Journal of Staff Development.
- Keen, Sam (2000). *The Sonoma Trapeze Troupe*. Learning to Fly
- Lerman, Liz, *Toward a Process for Critical Response*
- McDonald, Joseph P. (2002). *Teachers Studying Student Work: Why and How?* Phi Delta Kappan, October 2002
- Mohr, Nancy (1998). *Constructivist Zone*, Learning Forward.
- Skrla, L, McKenzie, K and Scheurich, J, (2009). Using Equity Audits to Create Equitable and Excellent Schools
- Vella, Jane (2002) *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: the Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. [chapter 1]
- Vogt, E. (2003). *The Art and Architecture of Powerful Questions*
- Vogt, E. (2003). *The Art of Powerful Questions*
- Warren Little, Judith (2003). *Looking at Student Work for Teacher Learning, Teacher Community and Schools Reform*, in Phi Delta Kappan, November 2003.

Outcomes of the Course:

Course participants will have the knowledge, skills, resources and tools to effectively improve the quality of instruction in their schools in all of the ways their teacher leadership role requires. This includes making reflections on and improvements to one's own teaching as well as supporting stronger instructional practice among one's colleagues.

Strategies for Assessing Student Performance and Awarding a Letter Grade:

All teachers will be required to demonstrate their mastery of the core course competencies by producing the following products:

Assessment 1: Analyzing Instruction via student or educator work - In this assessment, participants will demonstrate the use of evidence to analyze instruction via student or educator work. Participants will present student or educator work to colleagues, to include: developing a focus question, meeting in a pre-conference with a facilitator, choosing a protocol to structure the feedback, gathering feedback, making a change, and closing the loop with the feedback group about the change in practice and the impact of that change.

Assessment 2: Facilitating Growth-Oriented Dialogue on Instruction – As part of Assessment 1, participants will have identified opportunities to pre-conference with a colleague in preparation for an educator feedback session, and will then facilitate the session. In this assessment, participants will analyze and reflect upon their skills for facilitating dialogue and feedback.

Assessment 3: Evaluating and Adapting Instructional Resources – As a result of participation in the session, participants will identify and evaluate an instructional or professional development resource they are considering using. They will submit a written narrative that includes: 1) a description of the resource and the instructional context, and 2) a completed evaluation that lists the strengths and weaknesses of the resource, along with proposed adaptations for their context.

Assessment 4: Plan an Effective Professional Learning Experience - Plan a professional learning experience focused on teacher practice that fosters student learning for a small group of colleagues, receive feedback on the implementation plan, reflect on the feedback, and revise the plan (to be implemented in September 2012).

*Note: These assessments are aligned with the five competencies of the course. Teacher leaders will demonstrate their mastery of the first competency, "Understanding educators as adult learners," as they complete the four assessments.

Grading Policy:

1) Preparedness for and participation in class discussions and activities: 60% of grade

All participants are expected to come to the seminar prepared to discuss the assigned readings and to contribute their expertise, ideas and resources for the benefit of everyone's learning. In addition, participants are expected to bring a laptop to all course sessions.

2) Meeting expectations on course products (as described above): 20% of grade

All participants are expected to meet the expectations of the course assessments as evaluated by the provided rubrics. Participants are expected to turn in completed rubrics with their assessments.

3) Course attendance and punctuality: 20 % of grade

All participants are expected to make attendance and punctuality a priority and to take their commitment to this course seriously. Collaboration is required for every seminar session and activities are designed for regular engagement and reflection. Seminars will begin and end promptly.

Class Agenda:

The class agenda is organized by the knowledge and skills needed to complete the core assessments well.

- Since course participants come to the course with varying levels of expertise in course content, all will complete a **pre-assessment survey** upon course registration. The course facilitator(s) will use the pre-assessment survey results to identify which concepts and skills should be emphasized during course instruction in order to prepare the participants to succeed in completing the assessments with quality.
- The course facilitator will draw from a shared collection of instructional materials, and will adapt to meet the learning needs of participants (modeling a core competency).

For these reasons, participants should expect some variation from the following schedule.

Session 1. MONDAY 8-5

Before this session participants will read:

- Vella, Jane (2000). Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach, chapter 1.
- Fahey, K. (2012). *Where Principals Dare to Dream*. Journal of Staff Development.
- Bambino, D. (2002). *Critical Friends*. Educational Leadership.

Participants will learn:

- The 12 Principles of Adult Learning
- The development and use of group norms
- The rationale for using protocols to structure adult conversations
- The descriptive process in collaboratively examining student learning/student work
- How to use the Collaborative Assessment Protocol

Session 2. TUESDAY 8-5

Before this session:

- McDonald, J. P. (2007). The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press, *The Basics*, chapter 1.

- Blythe, Allen and Schieffelin (2007). Looking Together at Student Work. New York: Teachers College Press, chapter 3 and 4.
- Vogt, E. (2003). *The Art and Architecture of Powerful Questions*.
- Vogt, E., Brown, J. & Issacs, D. (2003). *The Art of Powerful Questions*.

Participants will learn:

- The elements and characteristics of professional learning communities
- The nature of effective feedback
- How to frame a focus question
- How to conduct a pre-conference
- How to write and give feedback on dilemmas from teaching
- How to construct and use powerful, probing questions for feedback
- How to use the Consultancy and Tuning Protocol

Session 3. WEDNESDAY 8-5

Before this Session:

- Allen & Blythe. (2004) Facilitators' Book of Questions. New York: Teachers College Press, chapters 3 and 4.
- Daniels Tatum, Beverly (2008). Can We Talk About Race? *Connecting the Dots*, chapter 2 OR
- Marriott, Donna. *Ending the Silence*, Kappan 2003.
- Skrla, L, McKenzie, K and Scheurich, J, (2009). Using Equity Audits to Create Equitable and Excellent Schools, chapters 1 and 10..

Participants will learn:

- Facilitation moves and techniques (with feedback)
- How to match protocols to the purpose/kind of feedback
- How to select and use protocols for examining student and educator work
- How to close the loop and engage in a cycle of inquiry
- How to select and use text protocols
- The relationship between teacher learning and educational equity

Session 4. THURSDAY 8-5

Before this Session:

- Lerman, Liz, *Toward a Process for Critical Response*.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2009). *How teachers learn*. Educational Leadership. pp. 46-53.
- Seashore Louis, Karen. *Building Professional Learning Communities in Schools*

Participants will learn:

- Selecting and using classroom observation protocols
- Taking low-inference notes
- Creating focusing questions for observations
- Debriefing classroom visits

Participants will continue practicing:

- Facilitation moves and techniques (with feedback)
- How to match protocols to the purpose/kind of feedback
- How to select and use protocols for examining student and educator work
- How to close the loop and engage in a cycle of inquiry

Session 5. FRIDAY 8-4

Before this Session:

- Breidenstein, A., Fahey, K, Hensley, F. (2012), *Leading for Learning*, Teachers College Press (selected chapter)
- Easton Brown, L. (2008). *From professional development to professional learning*, Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 89, No. 10, June 2008, pp. 755-759,761.
- Mohr, Nancy (1998). "Constructivist Zone." In JSD, Summer 1998, Vol. 19, No. 3. Keen, Sam (2000). *Learning to Fly, The Sonoma Trapeze Troupe*, chapter 5, p. 125-140.
- Amulya, Joy. What is Reflective Practice? Center for Reflective Community Practice, MIT.

Participants will learn:

- The stages of adult development and how that impacts adult learning and coaching moves
- The impact of generational differences in planning adult learning experiences
- Inquiry and advocacy in coaching adults
- A framework for designing and facilitating adult learning experiences
- How to design exercises that lead to individual reflection and reflective dialogue

Course Instructor

The facilitator of this course is:

Gene Thompson-Grove, M.Ed.
Independent Consultant
Co-Director, Clinical Teacher Education, Boston Plan for Excellence
Email Contact: genetg@gmail.com

Gene Thompson-Grove currently oversees professional support for BPE-BTR's Clinical Teacher Educators, as well as teacher residents, mentor teachers, BTR graduates, and colleagues in partner schools. Ms. Thompson-Grove began her career as a high school English and social studies teacher in Watertown, MA and later taught middle school in Cambridge, MA. Most recently, Ms. Thompson-Grove served as Director of Professional Development and Special Initiatives in the Brookline Public Schools.

For the past twenty years, she has worked with numerous reform organizations, schools and school districts; she has lead seminars on examining student work, understanding school culture, creating professional communities, engaging in collaborative inquiry, developing facilitative leadership, and designing and facilitating adult learning experiences. Ms. Thompson-Grove was a Clinical Professor in the Education Department at Brown University, and she worked for the Coalition of Essential Schools and Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown for ten years. She is a founding member of Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR), the National School Reform Faculty (NSRF), and more recently, the School Reform Initiative (SRI).