

Partnership Around Literacy Strategies

PALS Syllabus

From the spring through fall of 2010, OUSD partner schools will gain knowledge about Aspire's model of literacy instruction. PALS training will involve studying the conditions, principles, and practices that cultivate rigorous reading and writing instruction within Aspire's elementary schools. Thus, educators from OUSD partner schools will actively learn through engagement in structured observations and participation in professional development. In addition, resource materials and research on literacy instruction will be distributed, studied, and analyzed. The partnership's opportunities for professional learning will be tailored to individual needs and values pre-existing beliefs and practices and will transition from inputting new information, to observing and reflecting on conditions and practices, and, ultimately, to designing and implementing plans to adopt the literacy model.

April-May 2010 *Architecture for Effective Instruction*

The goals are to gain an understanding of Aspire's history, philosophy, and values and to become familiar with Aspire's pillars of literacy. Participants will learn about the supporting conditions for high quality literacy instruction.

Activities:

- **½ Day in May/June ::** Principal and teacher leaders observe literacy instruction at BMA focusing on the learning environment , classroom management, and instructional materials across grade levels
- **½ Day in May/June ::** Principal and teacher leaders engage in focs gruops with teachers and/or school leader to dialog about literacy model and supporting conditions - Q&A sessions for OUSD schools to deepen understanding

Resources:

- Aspire's instructional guidelines for reading and writing
- Aspire new teacher training documents on how to set up classrooms for literacy instruction, teach academic routines, and manage students
- Research on the role of effective learning environments in schools and classrooms (chapter by Marzano from *Classroom Management that Works*)

Reflection:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your environment for teaching and learning?
- What instructional materials are you currently using to teach phonics and fluency, comprehension, and writing?

June-July 2010 *Principles of the Literacy Model*

In preparation for training on Aspire's model of literacy instruction, participants will learn about Aspire's model of instructional leadership, use of collaborative norms, and focus on ongoing professional learning.

Activities:

- **Early June ::** OUSD schools conduct advising meetings with Sarah Woulfin to select and sign up for Aspire's summer professional development
- **½ Day during the week of June 7-10 ::** Convene to prepare for Aspire summer PD
 - o Development for OUSD Principals on dimensions of instructional leadership in Aspire schools
 - o Meet and engage with BMA's principal.
 - o Analyze Aspire's rubric for principal leadership
- **1-3 Day/s in July 12-16 ::** Principal and teacher leaders attend Aspire's summer professional development

Resources:

- Selections from Guided Reading by Fountas & Pinnell
- Selections from Art of Teaching Writing by Calkins
- Materials from Aspire's new teacher literacy training

Reflection:

- What is your role in observing and monitoring literacy instruction?
- How do you continue to develop as an educator? What resources do you turn to for ongoing learning?

August-December 2010 *Leveraging Literacy*

The goals are to learn about how Aspire's schools implement standards-based literacy instruction and conduct data-based decision making to continually improve instruction and raise achievement.

Activities:

- **½ Day in week of August 16-20 ::** Observe literacy instruction at BMA with a focus on how the teacher conducts standards-based instruction with gradual release of responsibility to students
- **Week of September 20-24 ::** Site visits at OUSD schools with walkthroughs by Sarah Woulfin and PALS leaders (OUSD/Aspire)
- **2.5 Hour meeting after school in the week of October 4-8 ::** workshop on how to facilitate a self-assessment of literacy practices at an OUSD Partner School
- **October- during a staff meeting ::** OUSD schools conduct a self-assessment of their principles and practices related to the pillars of literacy instruction
- **½ Day meeting in the week of November 1-5 ::** Training on data-based decision making at Aspire
 - o Observe a grade level team conducting a data talk
- **Mid-November ::** Optional workshop on the PALS Application process

PALS applications due on December 1, 2010

Resources:

- Aspire's documents for planning standards-based lessons
- Aspire's protocols and forms for data talks
- *Guided Reading* (1991)- an article by Anderson et al.

Reflection:

- How do you create and use standards maps and long and short term lesson planning? What is similar or different about your standards-based instruction?
- From your trainings and observations, what could you apply to data talks at your site?