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EDUCATION RESOURCE GROUP

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Creating Cultural Change in Schools

An Innovative Approach to Staff Development

This white paper provides a brief summary of the ERG job-embedded process and the impact it makes with teachers, students and schools. It ends with a graphic which synthesizes the content of the white paper.

The Problem:

Teachers readily acknowledge that the professional development they receive is typically disconnected to their day-to-day work in classrooms. The format is often whole group, includes a one size fits all approach, and is short-lived. This kind of staff development has historically focused on getting pedagogic or subject based information out to teachers. The lack of follow through, continuity, and short nature of this type professional development prevents true application and lacks the necessary components (elements, foundations, conditions, facets) required for cultural change. The impact on students consists of “happy accidents” at best. In fact, this format for staff development is the exact opposite of the kind of instruction we want to see in 21st century classrooms. It lacks differentiation, opportunities for responsiveness, and authenticity.

You will find in this white paper a solution to the above-mentioned problem. Professional development provided by *Education Resource Group* extends beyond traditional workshops to include, but not limited to; model lessons, a feedback support cycle, goal setting, showcase lessons, curriculum planning and development, book study groups, data analysis and individualized resources. Most of these take place within a live classroom- not a separate context. The *ERG* job embedded process differentiates support to meet the individual needs of teachers. This approach creates real impact at multiple levels by strengthening the link between educational theory and successful classroom implementation extending into a cultural change model.

Introduction:

Education Resource Group is based in Winston- Salem, North Carolina. The company was started in 2004 by two former K-12 educators with a passion and vision for instructional excellence. Having been teachers themselves, owners Hope Reagan and

Alice Oakley know first hand about going to workshops where participants “sit and get” and then return to the classroom for “business as usual.” Hope and Alice came together to form a vision of a more effective way for teachers to continuously grow, much like other professions such as the medical and law occupations. *ERG* is committed to the goal of providing high-quality services that promote the growth of all learners through a job-embedded process for building instructional effectiveness. *ERG*'s personalized projects are designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning.

Context: Modern and Innovative Staff Development

ERG's core focus is supporting teachers in the context of their own classrooms – no substitutes needed. *ERG* consultants demonstrate lessons, processes, and procedures “live” in their classrooms. Additionally, *ERG* has a unique formative feedback process that personalizes staff development and builds capacity of each teacher. This job embedded, on-site, staff development work is based on national standards and current best practices. *ERG* consultants follow up by working with teachers and administrators to set objectives and plan for the future. The end result is that students receive the benefit of the highest-quality instruction and are therefore better positioned to succeed. This modern and innovative approach to building teacher capacity is becoming more and more mainstream taking the place of the less effective one-shot workshop typically disconnected from the vision of the school or district.

Model: How it works

For over ten years the *ERG* researched based model for job-embedded staff development has evolved into a high quality experience for staff development. The process supports any subject area and any grade level. *ERG* works closely with schools to develop a

personalized plan maximizing time and resources at each visit. A school or district level project is executed by following a 10 step process:

1. Define a clear focus for the project and how many participants will be involved.

*Examples: guided reading, comprehension strategies, content literacy, writing, reasoning and collaboration in mathematics

2. Grade Level Meetings
3. Conduct Model Lessons – four to five teachers per day, per consultant
4. Conduct Observation/Support Sessions – four to five teachers per day, per consultant
5. Meet with teacher same day as the support session – teacher receives copy of feedback
6. Repeat steps four and five through out the year
7. Plan staff development according to the needs of the teachers

*Examples: book study, showcase lessons, additional model lessons, grade level meetings, “mini” workshops

8. On-going communication with school administrators
9. Exit letter and conference with administrators
10. Future planning with school

Typical Schedule:

In a typical day *ERG* consultants work with four to five teachers either modeling lessons or scheduling an observation support session. Written and oral feedback are given at each visit as well as a one on one conference. Goals are set for the teacher to practice between

ERG support sessions. “Tag teaming” with school level support people is a best case scenario for an *ERG* project and ensures the best results possible.

Date	Teacher – Grade	Observation or Model Lesson Time	Conference Time	Conference Location
October 11	Jones - 4	9:00 – 9:30	12:50 – 1:05	Classroom
	Smith - 4 (focus on conferring)	9:45 – 10:15	1:20 – 1:35	Classroom
	Brown - 4	10:30 – 11:00	2:10 – 2:25	Classroom
	Johnson - 3	11:15 – 11:45	1:45 – 2:00	Classroom
	Meeting with administrative Team		11:45-12:45	
	Grade level meeting with 4th grade		8:30-9:00	Ms. Reagan’s classroom
October 13	Reid - 4	9:00 – 9:30	1:00 – 1:15	Classroom
	Watson - 5	9:45 – 10:15	3:00 – 3:15	ESL room
	Rivera - 3 (go to book room to look at non-fiction books if possible)	10:30 – 11:00	1:55 – 2:05	Classroom
	Parsons - 3	11:15 – 11:45	2:10 – 2:25	Classroom
	Meeting with administrative Team		12:00-1:00	
October 18	Dozier - 5 (showcase lesson)	9:00 – 9:30	2:40 – 2:55	Classroom
	Small - 5	9:45 – 10:15	2:15 – 2:30	Media Center
	Cole - 3	10:30 – 11:00	1:45 – 2:00	Classroom
	Worth - 5	11:15 – 11:45	3:00 – 3:15	Conference Rm
	Meet with 5th grade re: higher order thinking resource		3:15-3:45	

Results: What the data tells us about our work

ERG's job embedded model for staff development is a process that facilitates cultural change impacting teachers, students and the school as a whole.

Teacher Impact

Teachers who are involved in *ERG* projects report in qualitative interviews that they gain confidence and self-efficacy. Teachers with high efficacy are likely to experiment with current ideas, continuously seek improved teaching methods and choose resources carefully. Data tells us the feedback given to teachers through the observation and support sessions is unquestionably the number one most liked aspect of an *ERG* job embedded project. Once teachers discover the value of receiving feedback, this leads them to seek out other resources to inform their instruction creating the idea of a reflective practitioner - a very important trait in the profession of teaching.

Student Impact

When teacher effectiveness increases, students receive the benefit of high quality instruction therefore they are better positioned to succeed with everyday class work, assessments and being a productive citizen. Teachers in *ERG* projects report student engagement increases allowing for more productive teaching time. Research undoubtedly shows the quality of teaching affects student achievement.

School Impact

Finally and very importantly, the *ERG* work helps create a school culture focused on learning. "Growing all learners" is a theme *ERG* incorporates through all work in the school and applies to all learners associated with the project. Teachers begin to come

together collaboratively as leaders to figure out what they **can do** to teach their specific population versus focusing on what they **can't do** and barriers to teaching and learning thus more of a positive school culture with the goal of maximizing the potential of students.

Our Process Facilitates Cultural Change



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