



## LitTOGETHER *Teacher Leader Project*

Welcome to another year of teacher leader study groups!  
Be on the cutting edge of literacy instruction, thinking  
with us!

Join our facilitators, who are teachers, coaches, and  
principals in many districts in New Jersey, to explore  
what matters most in teaching!

Just like in our summer institutes, our courses this year  
revolve around the theme of student and teacher  
engagement. You may attend these groups even if you  
didn't attend our institutes.

Read all the choices carefully, as there is great variety.  
You may sign up for as many courses as you'd like. This  
exploration of best practices is offered to you— totally  
free! We only ask that you show up!

Teaching can be a lonely profession...  
unless we learn together!



# STUDY GROUP OFFERINGS

*All study groups are from 4:15 to 6:15.*

## SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT THROUGH INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY

Session A: *Creating Student-Centered Classrooms of Choice in Secondary Grades*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 5-12

Facilitator: Matt Morone

Location: Pascack Valley High School, Hillsdale

Dates: January 17, February 7, February 28 (*all Tuesdays*)

*How can we support a student-centered learning environment that carefully balances choice and student growth? Pascack Valley High School teacher Matthew Morone will explore with you the development of “Open Classroom” philosophy in middle school and high school that can yield student independence, high levels of engagement, and skill acquisition at all levels.*



Session B: *Fostering Creativity in Our Schools and in Our Teaching*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 2-8

Facilitator: Matt Kimbell

Location: Stony Lane Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: January 31, February 28, March 21 (*all Tuesdays*)

*Sir Ken Robinson tells us in his groundbreaking Creative Schools, “...We don’t grow into creativity, we grow out of it. Or rather we get educated out of it.” With a renewed emphasis on creating innovative learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and when teaching and learning can feel so scripted, how do we embrace creativity as part of what our students do every day, and how do we bring our own voice back into our teaching? Paramus teacher Matthew Kimbell will help you rediscover the creative side of teaching and learning, and help you nurture practical ways to strengthen this critical part our learning lives.*

Session C: *Launching Makerspaces and Other Tools of Innovation*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-12

Facilitator: Melissa Signore

Location: Woodside Elementary School, River Vale

Dates: January 19, February 9, March 20 (*all Tuesdays*)

*The renewed emphasis on innovation and STEM instruction has skyrocketed many communities of learning into the use of makerspaces to extend the learning process. At their best, makerspaces truly enhance learning across disciplines while teaching into the very important personal skills of diligence and resilience! Learn together with River Vale principal Melissa Signore about the journey of establishing makerspaces in your school while also learning how to implement any type of curricular vision into your work.*



### SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT IN READING

Session D: *Cultivating a Community of Talk in in Classrooms*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-5

Facilitator: Pam Koutrakos

Location: Hamilton Elementary School, Glen Rock

Dates: January 12, February 9, March 2 (*all Thursdays*)

*Language is how we think and process information. If we want to create a classroom culture filled with thinking, we need to get students talking! A lot has been said about “accountable talk” - building these practices allows students to not only accurately and appropriately express their own ideas, but also respond and further develop others’ ideas. In this class, we will work together to discuss the importance of talk in the classroom. Join Gravity Goldberg, LLC staff developer Pam Koutrakos in an exploration of how read aloud is an ideal springboard for modeling and practicing sophisticated discussion. You will also discuss and practice different whole-class discussion techniques and routines, as well as learn methods for choosing, setting up, and eventually stepping back from reading partnerships, uncovering and practicing strategies to support amazing collaboration and conversation among students*

Session E: *Writing about Reading that Makes Sense!*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 3-5

Facilitator: Christine Chiaramonte

Location: Ridge Ranch Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: January 25, February 15, March 22 (*all Wednesdays*)

*Reader's notebooks are a valuable part of the upper elementary reading workshop experience. If you currently use notebooks, or want to start using them, this course is for you! Paramus reading specialist and literacy coach Christine Chiaramonte will delve into the efficacy of these important teaching tools, with very practical implications for the classroom. You will also be able to rev up your readers' interest in using them as a part of the process of comprehension, so that notebooks will become individualized tools that your readers grab on their own. Notebook know-how awaits you!*



Session F: *Teaching Deep Comprehension through Social and Emotional Issues of Literature*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-5

Facilitator: Margy Leininger

Location: Travell Elementary School, Ridgewood

Dates: March 14, April 4, April 18 (*all Tuesdays*)

*We read to learn, but we also read to grow! When we teach students to explore social and emotional issues within their texts, they learn to interpret, but they also learn about themselves and their worlds. Ridgewood principal Margy Leininger will lead this group on ways to tap into the social and emotional issues of books, particularly in the important teaching moments of read aloud in the elementary classroom.*

Session G: *Teaching Theme and Interpretation through Components of Balanced Literacy*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 3-8

Facilitator: Erica Lakind

Location: Dater Elementary School, Ramsey

Dates: February 22, March 8, March 22 (*all Wednesdays*)

*When we read books, we need to push readers to think about more than what's happening in that exact text at that exact moment. Readers today need to think more globally, in terms of larger truths or themes. Some of that instruction can happen in our daily conferences and minilessons, while other parts of this learning lies in other components of Balanced Literacy: namely shared reading and read aloud. Ramsey literacy coach Erica Lakind will provide strategies that can be implemented immediately to help readers grow to be interpretive and critical consumers of texts.*



### SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT IN WRITING

Session H: *Rethinking Nonfiction Writing*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 3-8

Facilitator: Lorraine Madden

Location: Hillside Avenue Elementary School, Cranford

Dates: February 8, March 1, March 22 (*all Wednesdays*)

*How do we write nonfiction that people will want to read? How do we empower students to write teaching texts that say exactly what they want them to say? Cranford literacy coach Lorraine Madden will teach you the newest methods of planning, drafting, and revising informational and opinion texts with hands-on techniques and tools that will engage and easily be used by your students tomorrow!*

Session I: *Reinventing the Writer's Notebook*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 3-8

Facilitator: Kathy Doyle

Location: Stony Lane Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: February 9, March 2, March 30 (*all Thursdays*)

*Notebooks are nets for tidbits, for the thinking and imaginations that develop from nature, art, music, travel, questions, problems—everything around us, including thinking, problem-solving, remembering, and a caring approach to our own lives and those of others. Join Kathy Doyle, whose classroom was a site for exploration for children and teachers alike, for an exploration of ways notebooks can become the playful and powerful resource writers celebrate and treasure. Participants will explore new inspiration sources and feed their curiosity as teachers and writers.*



Session J: *Become the Manual: Discovering New Writing Techniques for Your Conferences*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 3-8

Facilitator: Dana Clark

Location: Radburn Elementary School, Fair Lawn

Dates: March 7, March 28, April 18 (*all Tuesdays*)

*Is your bag of tricks running low during writing conferences? Stumped by your most talented student writers? End your conferring rut by joining Fair Lawn literacy coach Dana Clark's adult writing group where you'll explore your own craft and then import it into your conferring. Yes, be the manual! Harvest curriculum from your own learning in a true writing apprenticeship.*

Session K: *Exploring and Integrating Poetry to Lift the Level of Writing Across the Curriculum*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-8

Facilitator: Laurie Pandorf

Location: Shongum Elementary School, Randolph

Dates: February 21, March 7, March 21 (*all Tuesdays*)

*William Wordsworth says about poetry, "Fill the paper with the breathings of your heart." Do you feel that heart is missing in your students' writing? Can your students (or you) write beautiful poetry? Is that beauty missing from other types of writing? Randolph literacy coach Laurie Pandorf will lead you on an adventure through poetry and the work of Georgia Heard, Nancie Atwell, Amy Ludwig VanDerwater and others to learn how the beauty of poetry can enhance student and teacher writing across other genre.*



### SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT IN BOTH READING AND WRITING

Session L: *Bringing Balance to our Teaching*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-2

Facilitator: Christine Lagatta and Marc Biunno

Location: McKinley Elementary School, Westfield

Dates: February 28, March 21, April 18 (*all Tuesdays*)

*There are so many ingredients to the recipe of primary literacy instruction. Each serves its own unique purpose in creating the balanced needs of our youngest, and often most excited readers and writers. Join literacy consultant Christine Lagatta and Westfield principal Marc Biunno in a study that will push your thinking about balancing the components of Balanced Literacy by looking at shared reading, word study, and interactive writing. Together we will orchestrate these components, along with reading and writing workshop, into a symphony of learning for all students.*



Session M: *The Focus of It is Structure: Improving Reading and Writing through a Close Study of Structure*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 2-8

Facilitators: Kim Clancey and Laurie Hemmerly

Location: Ridge Ranch Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: February 2, March 2, March 23 (*all Thursdays*)

*When we carefully analyze the structures of text we learn about how ideas are developed and packaged in unique ways. This can help you synthesize and interpret as a reader, and carefully plan with tension in mind as a writer. Explore the work of close reading for structure with Kim Clancey and Laurie Hemmerly to dive into deeper and deeper comprehension, while pushing yourself past story mountains and 5-paragraph essays. It will add power to your reading, your writing, and your teaching!*



LitTOGETHER TEACHER LEADER  
KICKOFF WORKSHOP!!

START OFF YOUR TIME WITH US WITH A  
SPECIAL LAUNCHING WORKSHOP!

*SUPPORTING STUDENT AND TEACHER  
ENGAGEMENT*

*With Tom Marshall and members of the LitTogether Think Tank*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>

9:00am to 2:00pm

BARNES & NOBLE OF PARAMUS

765 Route 17 South, Paramus



*Come hear some fresh ideas on how to rev up student and  
teacher engagement!*

*Participation is free. Registration is required.*



## ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS

**Marc Biunno is the Principal of McKinley Elementary School in Westfield. He has also served as an assistant principal and supervisor of middle school ELA in Cranford. Prior to working in leadership, Marc taught 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and Journalism in Westfield.**

**Christine Chiaramonte is a reading specialist and literacy coach in the Paramus Public Schools. A former 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teacher and K-4 special education teacher, she is adept at helping struggling readers make strides in their reading.**

**Kim Clancey has taught many grades in the Paramus Public Schools. She regularly offers up her classroom as a labsite for professional development sessions, and was trained as a Paramus Literacy Coach under Judy Davis, Isoke Nia, and Dorothy Barnhouse.**

**Dana Clark is a reading specialist and literacy coach in the Fair Lawn Public Schools. She writes literacy curriculum for the elementary schools in Fair Lawn and coaches in classrooms regularly. Dana has served as President of the North Jersey Reading Council. You can follow her @dana\_dclark.**

**Kathy Doyle taught 5th Grade in the Tenafly Public Schools. She also taught grades 1 through 4 and now works extensively with middle and high school students. Her work in teaching writing and reading has been featured in many books on literacy instruction. She studied, learned alongside staff developers, and instructed in many Summer Institutes at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.**

**Laurie Hemmerly is a reading specialist and literacy coach in the Paramus Public Schools. She has taught Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and has written literacy units for Grades K and 1. You can follow her @LHemmerly**



**Matt Kimbell has taught Grades 2 and 3 in the Paramus Public Schools. He teaches in an inclusion setting. Matt has a degree in criminal justice and an MAT from Montclair State University. As a former Newark Bear, Matt integrates coaching into much of his teaching.**

**Pam Koutrakos is a staff developer with Gravity Goldberg, LLC. A former classroom teacher and literacy coach in Teaneck and Allendale, she has attended many summer institutes at Teachers College. Some of the work of her classroom is featured in *Mindsets and Moves* by Gravity Goldberg (Corwin 2016). She is a member of the Littogether Think Tank. You can follow her @PamKou.**



**Christine Lagatta is a former staff developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. She consults with many districts in New Jersey where she holds professional development for teachers, coaches, and principals in Grades K-8 and writes curriculum.**

**Erica Lakind is a literacy coach in Grades K-5 in Ramsey. A former 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher, Erica holds a degree in educational leadership. You can follow her @edrlakind.**

**Margy Leininger, Ed. D. is the Principal of Travell Elementary School in Ridgewood. A former literacy staff developer in Ridgewood, she has participated in study groups at Teachers College with Lucy Calkins, and is a member of the Littogether Think Tank. You can follow her @mdleing.**

**Lorraine Madden is a literacy coach in the Cranford Public Schools where she guides teachers across her district in their literacy instruction. She is active in NCTE, ILA and many other professional organizations. You can follow her @Sissy66Madden.**

Tom Marshall is the Principal of Stony Lane Elementary School, leader of the New Jersey Literacy Leaders' Network and Paramus Coaching Course, and a former staff developer and national consultant for the Teachers College Reading & Writing Project. He leads the LitTogether community in a Think Tank and on his blog, [www.littogether.com](http://www.littogether.com). Tom is currently writing a book on instructional leadership (Heinemann 2018). You can follow him @tomlittogether.

Matthew Morone is an English teacher at Pascack Valley High School in Hillsdale, New Jersey where he currently teaches Grade 10. He presently serves as Member-at-Large for the Conference on English Leadership (CEL) and has been published in their *English Leadership Quarterly*. Additionally, he was recently named a 2016 Princeton University Distinguished Secondary Teacher. Matt's "Open Classroom" instructional model has been featured in *The Bergen Record* and *NCLE* publications, among others. You can follow him @MrMorone.

Laurie Pandorf is a literacy coach and specialist at the Randolph Public Schools. She has attended many institutes at Teachers College, writes curriculum for her district, and facilitates teacher and parent workshops. As an English teacher, she has taught in a variety of grade levels both in elementary and middle school. You can follow her @LitCoach21.

Melissa Signore is the Principal of Woodside Elementary School in River Vale. She is a former instructional coach and curriculum coordinator for the Pascack Hills Public Schools.

