



LitTOGETHER
Teacher Leader Project

Welcome to our first year of 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!

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 Groups

All study groups will meet from 4:15 to 6:15.

Session A: *Exploring Mindsets in our Teaching and Learning*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-8

Facilitator: Matt Kimbell

Location: Stony Lane Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: January 12, January 26, February 9 (*all Tuesdays*)

Do you have students that become upset if they answer incorrectly? Maybe they become angry? Perhaps they shut down and refuse to participate? Chances are these types of students have what is known as a “fixed mindset.” They believe that they are no good at a specific skill and convince themselves that they will never be able to learn it. Join Matt Kimbell, and study how the most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, both of which are characteristics of a “growth mindset.” This view creates a love of learning and resilience which is necessary for success.

Session B: *Supporting Communities of Inquiry in Classrooms and Schools*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-8

Facilitators: Kim Clancey, Laurie Hemmerly, and Jennifer Jennings

Location: Ridge Ranch Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: January 13, January 27, February 17 (*all Wednesdays*)

Did you know that the average 4-year- old asks 390 questions a day and that when children start school that number drastically drops off? Why do some children stop asking and others continue to ask? Brilliant change makers throughout history all had one thing in common, they asked questions. There is a link between questioning and innovation yet even though research shows this link, questioning is not taught in schools. Why? How? When?

*Come with us on a journey of investigation into how we might rekindle the spark of inquiry in our schools, students, and our own lives. Participants will read Warren Berger’s thought-provoking book, *A More Beautiful Question* and create and investigate some of our own questions to push our thinking and the thinking of those we teach to a deeper place.*

Session C: *Fostering Teacher Leadership*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-8

Facilitator: Dana Clark

Location: Radburn Elementary School, Fair Lawn

Dates: January 27, February 4, February 17 (*all Wednesdays*)

We don't just teach together... We learn together: A study group on how teachers can open their doors and their minds to become a learning community.

Each day, we open up the doors to our classrooms and encourage our students to think together, grow ideas together, and be messy together because as educators, we understand the value of collaboration. However, these same classrooms full of student interaction and communication can be extremely isolating for us, the teachers. Leaning on each other can allow us to see brand new possibilities for ourselves and our students, transforming our classrooms! In this study group, we'll develop tools to help us communicate with colleagues, study coaching methods to make the thinking behind our teaching moves visible, and learn about ways to welcome colleagues into our classrooms in order to study together, teach together, and grow together.

Session D: *Bringing Aligned Values and Actions to Teacher Leadership*

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-8

Facilitator: Laurie Pandorf

Location: Shongum Elementary School, Randolph

Dates: January 14, January 26, February 2 (*all Thursdays*)

*How do teachers and teacher leaders bring their vision of what matters in learning to daily practice alongside Common Core Standards? Literacy coach Laurie Pandorf will explore this often overlooked but critical aspect of teacher leadership, and help you discover just how to teach rigorous curriculum while honoring what matters most in how students learn! You will explore the new text, *The Teacher You Want to Be* and engage in your own reflection.*

Session E: Individual Coaching on Best Practices

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 2-5

Facilitator: Kathy Doyle

Location: At your own school

Dates: TBD, during the school day

When classrooms support inquiry in learning, students view themselves as learners in the process of learning and are actively engaged in the exploration of a unit of study. They raise questions, propose explanations, and use observations. Students plan and carry out learning activities and communicate using a variety of methods. Kathy Doyle, a nationally renowned teacher whose work is referenced in books and articles on the teaching of reading and writing can help you explore the art of inquiry! Kathy has recently begun to study methods of fostering communities of risk, play, and inquiry. She is a master at meeting students just where they are and pushing them to rich expression in writing and deep comprehension in reading.

Session F: Teaching Important Skills through Interactive Writing and Shared Reading

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades K-2

Facilitators: Laverne O'Boyle and Mary Ellen Baker

Location: Memorial Elementary School, Paramus

Dates: March 1, March 15, March 29 (*all Tuesdays*)

There are so many early literacy skills that need to be taught in the primary years! Only through proper utilization of the many components of Balanced Literacy can teachers truly ensure that these skills are taught both implicitly and explicitly in an authentic context! Join Laverne O'Boyle and Mary Ellen Baker in a study of exactly what this work can look like!

Session G: Authentic Writing about Reading

Intended Audience: Teachers of Grades 4-8

Facilitators: Christine Lagatta and Matthew Bolton

Location: Edison Intermediate School, Westfield

Dates: January 7, February 4, March 3 (*all Thursdays*)

Finding authentic ways for students to respond to reading poses a challenge for upper elementary and middle school teachers alike. With the leadership of Christine Lagatta and Matthew Bolton, this teacher leader group will examine how readers use writing as a tool to deepen understanding, as well as explore ways to motivate and engage readers.

LitTOGETHER TEACHER LEADER
KICKOFF WORKSHOP!!

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

*FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF RISK IN
CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS*

*With Tom Marshall, Christine Lagatta, and members of the
LitTogether Think Tank*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7TH

9:00am to 2:00pm

LOCATION TBA



*Come hear some fresh ideas on how to inspire your students and
your colleagues to be innovative in their learning!*

Participation is free. Registration is required.

ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS

Mary Ellen Baker has taught Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade in New Jersey, Georgia, and Florida. She currently teaches Kindergarten in Paramus and frequently opens up her classroom to visitors who are beginning to learn about reading and writing workshop.

Matt Bolton is the Principal of Edison Intermediate School in Westfield. Matt has a Masters in Educational Leadership from Bank Street College of Education and is currently a doctoral candidate at Fordham University with research interests in principal and teacher self-efficacy. Matt has a rich background of teaching and school leadership experience. He taught second and sixth grade and has served as a school leader at the early childhood, elementary, and middle school levels.

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.

Kathy Doyle is a retired 5th Grade teacher in the Tenafly Public Schools. She has appeared in many books on literacy instruction and is a frequent instructor at the Teachers College Reading & Writing Project.

Laurie Hemmerly is a reading specialist and literacy coach in the Paramus Public Schools. She has taught Kindergarten and 1st Grade and has written literacy units for Grades K and 1.

Jennifer Jennings is a reading specialist and literacy coach in Paramus. During her time as a Kindergarten and 1st Grade teacher, she often opened up her classroom to visitors and professional development sessions.

Matt Kimbell teaches 2nd Grade 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.

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.

Tom Marshall is the Principal of Stony Lane Elementary School, leader of the New Jersey Literacy Leaders' Network, and a former staff developer and national consultant for the Teachers College Reading & Writing Project. His website, www.littogether.com, is a resource on literacy instruction for teachers, coaches, and administrators.

Laverne O'Boyle is the Principal of Memorial Elementary School in Paramus. She has also worked as a teacher and supervisor of special education.

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.