

Introduction to IDE Corp. Professional Development Services

EDUCATING TODAY'S YOUTH

Schools are charged with educating students to be well-rounded individuals who will serve as contributing members of a global society. The world has changed drastically in the past twenty years, so most teachers, even the youngest, did not grow up in a society like that of today's. The digital generation uses technology and manages information far differently from their predecessors. Our "flat" world requires one to be a global citizen, where local issues are global issues. What skills do students need to succeed and thrive in such a world? What are the implications for the teaching / learning process? For the roles of teachers and students in the classroom?

PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS

Raising academic rigor, actively engaging students in learning, and building greater student responsibility for learning are worthy goals for any school. IDE Corp. has at its core ten principles that successful classrooms share that ensure success in meeting these goals:

- Higher-Order, Open-Ended Problem-Solving
- High Academic Standards
- Learning From a Felt Need
- Global Citizenship
- Technology Infusion
- Individual Learning Paths
- Student Responsibility for Learning
- Connected Learning
- Collaboration
- High Social Capital

IDE Corp. consultants work with teachers and administrators to design learning environments that are the embodiment of these principles.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

Educational change falls into two categories, as defined by Ron Heifetz: technical and adaptive. Technical change seeks to solve problems for which there are known solutions. The required changes are relatively easy, can be approached, for example, through workshops, and can be the substance of turnkey training situations. Examples of technical include using rubrics, writing high quality test questions, designing tiered lessons for differentiation, and utilizing varied questioning techniques. Adaptive change seeks to solve problems for which the known solution is not as clear. Such change requires people to think differently about how they go about doing their work, to shift their belief systems to develop new models. Designing classrooms that continue to promote a high level of achievement for all learners while preparing them for their lives as global workers and citizens requires adaptive change.



THE WORK WE DO

IDE consultants specialize in bringing about instructional and organizational change. While through our work we provide teachers with instructional strategies to use in their classrooms, our emphasis is on understanding each individual educator and moving him or her to embrace new structures and strategies that will lead to student success. We provide professional development in many areas, including:

- **Differentiated Instruction** at the lesson, unit, and classroom levels
- Response To Intervention (**RTI**) classrooms
- Building **Student Responsibility for Learning**
- **Formative Assessment** to drive instruction
- **Inclusion Classrooms**
- **Problem-Based Learning**
- **Technology Infusion**
- **Web 2.0** Tools
- **1:1 Laptop Initiatives**
- **New Teacher** Training
- Training **New Teacher Mentors**
- Teaching the **Digital Generation**
- Understanding by Design (**UbD**)
- Universal Design for Learning (**UDL**)
- Professional Learning Communities (**PLCs**)
- Small Learning Communities (**SLCs**)
- The impact of **Poverty** on learning
- **Leadership** Skills
- **Teacher Observation**

A successful classroom is a complex interweaving of structures and strategies that work together to create classroom environments that allow all children to achieve at high levels in engaging ways. While we provide consulting and professional development in each of the above areas; we view them as interdependent components of successful learning environments; and the highest level of success will be realized when multiple areas are addressed simultaneously.

KEYNOTES AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS

IDE Corp. consultants provide keynote presentations on critical topics designed to fit the needs of the school or district. We design staff development day offerings with the dual purpose of providing educators with new skills, structures, and strategies while modeling new ways of thinking about instructional delivery. While we will design workshop topics to fit the needs of the school or district, some of the more popular topics are:

- *Engaging Today's Students*
- *Differentiating Instruction through Problem-Based Learning*
- *Technology as a Power Partner in Differentiating instruction*
- *Meeting the Needs of the Digital Generation*
- *The Power of Literacy Across the Curriculum*
- *Designing Small Learning Communities*
- *Continual Innovation through Professional Learning Communities*
- *New Teacher Induction*



COHORT-BASED CONSULTING

IDE's hallmark work is in bringing about adaptive change in classrooms and resultant cultural change in schools through cohort-based work, as described below:

An IDE consultant would work with a small cohort of teachers who will eventually play a greater role in helping others embrace new paradigms for classroom instruction that address the needs of a diverse group of learners.

Teachers would be selected on a volunteer basis, using a "Call for Participation" looking for teachers who are interested in developing fully-differentiated classrooms that promote strong student engagement in learning, greater academic rigor, and greater student responsibility for learning.

These teachers would receive eight to ten days of summer training (Release-time training is possible during the school year; however, the summer experience is preferred.) The purpose of the training is four-fold:

- To provide teachers with "aha" experiences to shift their belief systems as to what is possible in the classroom
- To provide teachers with structures and strategies for differentiating instruction at the lesson, unit, and classroom levels
- To allow teachers the time and support to develop instructional materials to use in their classrooms
- To model the structures and strategies of a fully differentiated classroom so that teachers feel what it is like to be a learner in such an environment

Through the training, teachers will design and implement authentic learning units that embrace the ten principles of successful classrooms. Participants would meld existing district initiatives into one model for instruction in their classrooms.

The IDE consultant would then be on-site throughout the school year to work with teachers on an individual basis. The consultant would at times visit the classroom and provide feedback, support, and ideas; the consultant and teacher would at times meet outside of class to debrief a lesson or plan additional lessons or units. The consultant would be on site ten times across the year.

A cohort is engaged in training across a three-year period, being joined by new cohorts each year. After the third year, teachers are selected from the first cohort to serve as Teacher Facilitators and assist in training and mentoring other teachers.

While immediate gains are realized in the first year, a critical mass of those shifting paradigms for teaching emerge in the third year; cultural change is evident in the fifth year; and the capacity to continue the change process with a significant reduction in consultant time tends to occur in the seventh year.

WHO WE ARE

IDE Corp – Innovative Designs for Education – is an educational consulting firm specializing in instructional and organizational design. The company was founded in 1987 by Dr. Nancy Sulla. Dr. Sulla is known nationally for her work in designing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*. She is a video professor for Canter Productions' Distance Learning Masters in Teaching program; her work is featured in three videos by the Video Journal of Education on *The Technology-Infused Classroom*;



her published articles seek to inspire educators to take the next step; and she is a frequently-invited speaker at national and local conferences.

IDE Corp. produces the *IDEportal* (www.ideportal.com - see Appendix A) – an on-line instructional and professional development resource for teachers – and the *Technology Infusion ToolKit* (www.idetoolkit.com) – an on-line professional development tool to assist teachers in rethinking the role of technology in today's schools.

IDE Corp. consultants designed the on-line NJ HSPA tutorials for language arts literacy and math. IDE President Dr. Nancy Sulla regularly conducts workshops for the state Dept. of Education, including those focusing on differentiated instruction and a partnered workshop with Grant Wiggins on designing exemplary classrooms.

THE USE OF OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS

Many schools turn to IDE Corp. consultants for the help they need providing ongoing, sustained professional development for their teachers and administrators. Consider that outside consultants: a) are totally focused on professional development when they are on-site, not encumbered by the day-to-day activities of school; b) are outside the school culture and therefore can offer an objective perspective of where the district is and where it needs to go regarding pedagogical change; and c) are supported by the company's infrastructure to keep abreast of research, theory, and practice in the field.



APPENDIX A

The IDEportal

The *IDEportal* (www.ideportal.com) can help teachers rethink instruction....

The *IDEportal* is an online resource that provides teachers with instructional materials and professional development opportunities that will foster a new approach to teaching. It's a virtual consultant ready to help educators shift paradigms!

The *IDEportal* has a variety of materials for curriculum, instruction, technology-infusion and professional development:

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Tasks

PBL units include an open-ended problem statement and an analytic rubric. Teachers can use higher-order problems to teach lower-order skills and content, giving students a felt need to learn that will increase their level of engagement. Teachers can use a rubric to delineate expectations at the beginning of a unit and allow students to take ownership of their learning.

How-To Sheets

How-To Sheets offer step-by-step directions for technology tasks. Teachers can use How-To Sheets as an alternative to whole class instruction – to honor different learning styles and engage students in learning.

Online Workshops

Online Workshops offer teachers self-directed professional development opportunities over the Internet. The workshops cover a variety of topics and can be completed independently, collaboratively, or as part of a group workshop.

Emerging Thoughts

Emerging Thoughts articles offer thought-provoking insights about ways to shift the educational paradigms we sometimes take for granted. These can be used at faculty meetings to engage teachers in reflective discussion.

TechTonic

TechTonic articles uncover some of the most cutting-edge ideas in educational technology and offer ideas for transformative technology-infusion in the classroom. These can be used to help teachers find creative ways to use technology to enhance instruction.

IDE Tools

IDE Tools are some of the same materials that the IDE consultants use in their paradigm-shifting work with teachers and administrators. These materials are specially designed to be self-guiding and user-friendly, and they can be incorporated into workshops or professional development plans.

