



A Professional Development Corporation

Federal Stimulus Funds Rationale: Title I; Title II Part A;

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has announced that SEAs and LEAs can effectively and correctly use Title I, Title II, and IDEA funds to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified, that these highly qualified teachers are available to all students, and that effective interventions reach low performing schools. Active Learning Systems has over 20 years of experience with high-quality professional development for administrators, teachers, and students in student research skills training and application using the IIM research model.

The following uses of Recovery Funds for IIM materials and training are consistent with ARRA principles:

(taken from www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.pdf)

Professional development includes, but is not limited to activities that:

- **Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of academic subjects and enable teachers to become highly qualified in content knowledge and in classroom practices**

Active Learning Systems' outstanding and effective Professional Development offerings improve teachers' knowledge of a seldom taught but universally assigned content area – research skills – through the IIM research model.

“The Independent Investigation Method is perhaps the best instructional strategy to have been embraced at Central School...an important tool for facilitating student learning, developing information literacy skills, fostering independence, and promoting 21st century learning skills. IIM seamlessly integrates with classroom instruction and blends perfectly with our philosophical framework of differentiated instruction.”

Melanie Horowitz (Principal): Central School, Wilmette, IL.

- **Are an integral part of broad school/districtwide educational improvement plans**

IIM becomes a critical part of the schoolwide and districtwide plan to integrate and maintain chosen initiatives for school improvement in at-risk schools.

In Lake County, Florida, the focus was on raising ELA test scores. “Five ‘at-risk’ schools (based on % of population on reduced/free lunch) whose teachers were trained in IIM by consultants Cindy Nottage and Virginia Morse improved their Language Arts FCAT scores each year during a three-year period (2001 results).”

Beatrice Hopkins (ELA Director, Calcasieu Parish, LA): “Rationale for Research-Based Strategies,” Grant Application (awarded), 2002.

- **Carry out teacher advancement initiatives to promote professional growth**

Training options include a Train-the-Trainer model for on-site teacher leadership opportunities and assurance of continuity for the IIM model. Between 2002-2008, over 200 teachers, library media specialists, literacy coaches, g/t and curriculum coordinators, and department heads have been certified and now maintain the IIM model at their campuses and districts to give continuity to the model and to assure the outcomes in improved student skills and scores.

“I feel so much more confident to return to my school to train and support my colleagues, just as my principal envisioned.”

Melanie Bowen (Librarian): Carl Schurtz Elementary, New Braunfels, TX.

- **Give teachers and principals the knowledge and skills to help students meet challenging State academic standards;**

An authentic research model such as IIM ensures competency in targeted state standards and teaches skills that can be applied to 21st century tasks.

A 21st century education includes “the ability to argue, ... conduct research, and acquire such ‘habits of mind’ as the ability to invent or synthesize information...skills critical to student success as college freshmen, professionals and participants in a democracy.”

Mike Schmoker: “Measuring What Matters.” Educational Leadership, ASCD, January, 2009.

- **Are sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused and are not one-day or short-term workshops**

Active Learning Systems’ professional development plan includes interactive multi-day workshops, in-school residencies, model lessons in the classroom, and sustained support from headquarters.

“Professional development can and should have an impact on student achievement. The Council for School Performance had identified the following characteristics of effective professional development programs:

- *Long-term programs embedded in the school year*
- *Active learning activities, such as demonstrations, practice and feedback*
- *Collaborative study of student learning*
- *Administrative support for continuing collaboration to improve teaching and learning.”*

Terrence Young: “No School Library Media Specialist Left Behind: Professional Development.” Knowledge Quest, AASL, January/February, 2004.

- **Advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research;**

IIM training gives teachers the use of effective instructional strategies that have been proven to increase student achievement.

*Robert J. Marzano, et al. have examined decades of research findings to distill results into nine broad teaching strategies that have positive effects on student learning. These include: “*Summarizing and notetaking. *Cooperative learning. *Setting objectives and providing feedback. * Generating and testing hypotheses. * Questions, cues, and advance organizers.”*

Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, Jane E. Pollack: Classroom Instruction That Works: Research Based Strategies for Increased Student Achievement, ASCD, 2001.

- **Provide training to enable teachers and principals to involve parents in their children’s education**

To extend and enhance the IIM training in the classroom, Active Learning Systems offers a variety of parent training options and materials to involve parents in what their children are learning in school.

“Learning and using IIM was the most significant factor in my child’s academic success.”

Parent of class salutatorian: Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston, NH, 1999.

- **Instructional materials that are part of the professional development activities**

IIM materials are cost-effective and offer teachers the instruction and support they need to teach and use the model. These materials compliment all professional development with materials for K – 12 teachers, students, and parents.

“Because I have seen the responses to and implementation of IIM by literally hundreds of K-12 teachers, principals, and curriculum directors, it is my first choice in materials that I recommend to teach not only research but organizational and critical thinking skills as well.”

Judy Bridges (Principal, Director of Enhanced Academic Services, TAGT Past President): Carver Center, Midland, TX.