

AEA 9 Districts/Buildings in IA Core ELA Professional Development Work, 2011-2015 Description of Workshops and Follow-up Coaching:

This is text from an article submitted to "The Communicator" in Fall 2014. The article is a sample of the courses that have been offered over the past 5 years to support teachers and administrators in learning about and implementing instruction aligned to the Iowa Core.

English Language Arts teachers dove right in! Over 140 teachers of English Language Arts (ELA) and building/district administrators proved to be model learners as well as educators this summer as they participated in one or more of the ELA course/workshop offerings:

Iowa Core ELA: Quality Instruction and Assessment – Grades K-2 and Grades 3-5:

These courses are an introduction to the Iowa Core ELA standards with the content based on the meaning and intention of the Iowa Core ELA standards as well as the pedagogy of teaching and assessing the standards with fidelity. Participants examine the Iowa Core English Language Arts Standards with a focus on the history, development, format, and structure of the standards. They will deconstruct (unwrap) the standards to determine the concepts and skills that are embedded within each standard. This will lead to the creation of learning targets for selected standards. Teachers will connect the unwrapped standards and learning targets to create integrated, standards-based lessons. These lessons will be based on the pre-designed units (units 1, 3, and 5) that will be provided. The expectation is that the units will be implemented throughout the school year with support from the coach and the collaborative grade-level team from the cohort. Participants will also engage in learning based on the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework for quality instruction. Creating standards-based focus lessons that include purpose, learning targets, and modeling will be the basis of the observation and coaching conversations for the course. Participants will work collaboratively among and across districts to design standards-based lessons (within the pre-designed unit provided) for which they collect, analyze, and use data to inform instruction. Participants will engage in monthly coaching (Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb., Apr.) that includes an observation and coaching conversation with an AEA coach. Note: These courses began in June and will continue throughout 2014-2015.

Coaching Strategies for Iowa Core ELA Implementation: K-12 ELA Teacher Leaders:

This course was designed to support K-12 District/building literacy or instructional coaches with ELA duties as they work with teachers. Participants deepened their understanding of the Iowa Core ELA standards and examined best teaching and coaching practices that support Iowa Core ELA standards-based instruction and assessment. Participants will engage in coaching as well. Note: This course began in June and will continue throughout 2014-2015.

Iowa Core Leadership: K-12 Principals, Curriculum Directors, etc.:

Participants in this three half-day workshop received a brief orientation to the Iowa Core English Language Arts Standards. They began to deepen their understanding of the work of teachers and building/district leaders in implementing the Iowa Core ELA standards. This workshop is designed to clarify administrators' roles as they lead this work and support teachers in their districts/buildings. Note: This course began in June and will continue throughout 2014-2015.

ELA: The Basics K-12:

Participants examined the Iowa Core English Language Arts Standards by learning the history, development, format and structure of them. Participants dug into the vocabulary and intent of the standards. They unwrapped standards and developed learning targets for selected standards. They also explored the connection of standards to the classroom. Note: This course will be offered again in February 2015.

Instructional Routines and Strategies for Implementing the Iowa Core ELA Standards in

Grades 6-12: This course provided ELA teachers with several instructional routines/strategies to use in standards-based lessons. Participants examined close reading, think aloud, graphic organizers, student writing models, circle of knowledge, and vocabulary CODE. Participants worked independently and collaboratively as they developed standards-based lessons incorporating these instructional routines/strategies

ELA Unit Standards (Unit 1) for Grades 6-12: To support the implementation of the Iowa Core ELA standards, AEA reading consultants worked with teams of teachers to develop grade-level, year-long K-12 Scope and Sequence charts for the past year. In these scope and sequence charts, teachers find the ELA standards divided into teachable units. Participants examined resources provided for implementation: the K-12 Scope and Sequence and the Unit Planning Organizer for unit 1. They developed standards-based lessons aligned to that unit. Note: This course will continue throughout the 2014-2014 year.

The teachers and administrators who attended these sessions engaged in the work of making the Iowa Core ELA standards a classroom reality. Many of them will continue their learning as some of these courses continue throughout the year.

Instructors of these courses include these Quality Learning Consultants: Ann Craig, Helen Duranleau-Brennan, Lisa Hawker, Kathleen Learn, Leigh McEwen, Terri Parker, and Beth Roland.

Submitted by Kathy Learn