



Date: February 28, 2006

To: Superintendents and Principals, Curriculum Coordinators and Science Teachers

From: Margaret Van Fossen, Assistant Coordinator of Quality Learning
Sally Rigeman, Science Consultant

Re: Two LEA Opportunities to Participate in Every Learner Inquires (ELI) Trainings
Iowa Department of Education Science Initiative

Attached documents include information about the ELI Science initiative that will be launched the week of July 31-August 3, 2006. The goals of Every Learner Inquires include:

Student Learning Goal:	Improve science learning for all K-12 students in the state of Iowa
Teacher Learning Goal:	Build teacher leadership and content expertise within the system
Teacher Practice Goal:	Implement inquiry-based instruction
Organizational Goal:	Establish a structure that sustains the implementation of Every Learner Inquires (ELI)

At this time, LEA participants have **two opportunities** to consider.

The first opportunity is to form a **District Science Capacity Building Team** comprised of one or two elementary and secondary teachers from your building/district. We feel we can support a maximum of two LEA teams. Special consideration will be given to teams from high needs schools/districts in the area of science and/or those on SINA or "Watch List."

District Capacity-Building Team Criteria

Each teacher member

1. Must have five years of experience teaching science.
2. Have experience in a leadership role with professional development.
3. Agree to sign a four-year commitment to the Every Learner Inquires statewide initiative.
4. Must have a signed commitment from their Principal for their participation in summer and academic year workshops over the four-year period of Every Learner Inquires.
5. Will implement inquiry strategies presented in summer and academic year workshops as determined by the team.
6. Will keep implementation logs and report the effectiveness of the inquiry strategies in the classroom.
7. Will participate in school/district meetings on a regular basis with staff from their AEA.
8. Must believe in the value and effectiveness of inquiry-based science.
9. Will participate in ongoing electronic or face-to-face communication between workshops as determined by the team.

To be a member of the **District Capacity Building Team**, you must fax the attached application to Margaret Van Fossen at (563) 359-5967 [Attention: M. Van Fossen] **on/before March 17, 2006**. For an application to be considered, a district/building **must submit a team minimum of 3-5 participants**. The team must include **one elementary teacher, one secondary teacher, and one administrator** (principal, curriculum coordinator, or science specialist). If you choose to submit 4 or 5 participants, it is a district/building choice whether the additional two people are elementary or secondary teachers.

In return for the commitment, District Capacity Building Teams will receive ongoing support and professional development throughout the ELI initiative from their AEA and the Iowa Department of Education. Teachers and/or schools will receive state financial support for ELI participation outside contract time as well as resources pertaining to the ELI initiative. Leadership opportunities may be available as a result of participation in ELI initiative.

The second opportunity is to be a **Case Study School**. Additional information will be forthcoming about this second district/building opportunity in the Every Learning Counts training. There is no application process at this time.

Criteria for Case Study Schools in the Every Learner Inquires (ELI) State Science Initiative

1. Provide base-line data for student achievement in science.
2. Implement inquiry strategies presented in summer and academic year workshops.
3. Keep implementation logs and report the effectiveness of the inquiry strategies in the classroom.
4. Have school team meetings on a regular basis with staff from their AEA.
5. The Principal must participate in the summer workshop and show complete commitment of their teachers of science to the ELI state initiative for a two-year period.
6. The school (teachers, administrators) is willing to allocate significant science instructional time as well as building in-service time to inquiry-based strategies.
7. The Case Study School will commit the entire science teaching staff to the ELI initiative over a two-year period for the summer workshops. The school will commit grade level representatives during the academic school year.
8. Working with the Evaluator assigned to the ELI project, the school will collect and analyze both summative and formative data. Other data to be collected may include attitudinal surveys of teachers and students and anecdotal data.

A total of 4 Case Study Schools will be selected statewide. At this time it is anticipated that state funds will be allocated to support district Case Study School participation in the 4 year ELI initiative. In return for the commitment, Case Study Schools will also receive ongoing support and professional development throughout the ELI initiative from their AEA and the Iowa Department of Education. Leadership opportunities may be available as a result of participation in ELI initiative.