



# AFT Professional Learning Program for Educators





Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

Fedrick C. Ingram  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

### **AFT Executive Council**

J. Philippe Abraham	David Hecker
Shelvy Y. Abrams	Karla Hernandez-Mats
Frederick R. Albert	Jan Hochadel
Barbara Bowen	Jerry T. Jordan
Vicky Rae Byrd	Frederick E. Kowal
Zeph Capo	Stephanie Ly
Donald Carlisto	Terrence Martin, Sr.
Larry J. Carter, Jr.	John McDonald
Kathy A. Chavez	Daniel J. Montgomery
Donna M. Chiera	Michael Mulgrew
Melissa Cropper	Andrew Pallotta
Amanda Curtis	Donna Phillips, RN
Jolene T. DiBrango	Juan Ramirez
GlenEva Dunham	Jesse Sharkey
Marietta A. English	Andrew Spar
Francis J. Flynn	Denise Specht
Jeffery M. Freitas	Wayne Spence
Lisa J. Gourley	Jessica J. Tang
David Gray	Adam Urbanski
Ron Gross	Debbie White, RN
Anthony M. Harmon	Carl Williams

### **Our Mission**

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	<b>Introduction</b>	8	Community/Family Involvement
2	<b>Key Features</b>	9	Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
2	<b>Course Benefits</b>	11	Instructional Supports for All Learners
2	<b>Course Design</b>	15	Math
4	<b>Get Started in Your Local</b>	18	Reading
4	<b>When Are Courses Scheduled?</b>	19	Science
4	<b>National Events</b>	20	Special Needs
5	<b>Featured Courses</b>	23	<b>Customized Professional Learning to Meet Diverse Teaching and Learning Needs</b>
5	Delivering Effective Professional Development	27	<b>Online Resources</b>
5	Classroom Management/Behavior		

## Introduction

The AFT has long recognized that the union's responsibilities go beyond the traditional "bread and butter" issues of salary and benefits. The AFT Professional Learning Program represents one of the union's major efforts to improve student achievement by making a difference in practitioners' performance and professional growth.

In 1981, the AFT received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop a series of courses to encourage all practitioners to improve their practice and their students' performance by becoming users of research. Today, the AFT Professional Learning Program offers graduate-level courses ranging from 30 to 45 hours, three-hour modules, webinars, technology tools and more to appeal to all educators.

By addressing the professional needs of our educator members, we are able to help them be even more successful in their careers; the union; the institutions in which they work; and in serving their students, families and communities.

# “ I have told my fellow teachers

on many occasions that this is top-notch staff development, and all teachers should take advantage of it. Taking courses from respected teaching professionals who know the challenges we face because they have lived them makes it even more valuable. I am a much

# stronger union supporter

because of these courses.



## Key Features

The AFT professional learning and member engagement program empowers educators to connect theory to practice and improve student outcomes. AFT professional learning:

- **Is rooted** in evidence-based educational, cognitive and social science research.
- **Is guided** by cutting-edge experts in the field and designed by frontline educators who know firsthand what goes on in classrooms and schools every day.
- **Provides** educators with the necessary tools and resources to make complex decisions and select the most effective strategies for meeting individual students' academic, social and behavioral needs.
- **Connects** excellent teaching practice with broader educational policy issues and campaigns.

## Course Benefits

Union-sponsored professional learning strengthens our relationship with AFT members and is an indispensable tool for building broader, deeper support for the union.

- **It provides** a direct way for more members to get to know the values of our union as a professional organization dedicated to enhancing both the profession and the practice of its members.
- **It opens** up lines of communication for worksite leaders to seek out colleagues and conduct member-to-member outreach around professional issues.
- **It creates** networking opportunities for members to meet other members and build a stronger union!

## Course Design

Our professional learning and engagement program is based on the train-the-trainer model of professional learning.

- **This model** allows for internal capacity building and enables affiliates to meet the unique needs of their school community.
- **When** professional learning is led by peers from similar backgrounds, contexts and experiences, participants are more likely to buy into the process and incorporate new knowledge into their practice.
- **AFT national** member-trainers assist in the development of coursework and deliver training through the AFT's Summer Educator Academy or locally based trainings. There are also opportunities for participation in member-led web-based professional learning and seminars.



# Participating in this professional development

has affirmed my belief that the union has the needs of its members as its top priority. The researched strategies/concepts are best practices that can

**inform and drive instruction.**





“

The  
researched  
strategies/

concepts presented are best practices  
that can inform and drive instruction.

”

## Get Started in Your Local

We start with setting goals for member-to-member outreach and participation. We discuss how to use the program as a springboard to identify issues and increase activism on federal, state or local educational policy issues. We identify professional practice topics that best match your members' interests and your local union's campaign needs. The AFT educational issues department partners with your local union and state federations to put this plan together. Issues regarding roles, responsibilities and budgetary considerations will be outlined through this process. To find out more about starting a professional learning program in your local, contact [edissues@aft.org](mailto:edissues@aft.org).

## When Are Courses Scheduled?

The AFT provides professional learning opportunities at several events throughout the year. In addition, the national union works with state federations and local affiliates to deliver coursework locally or virtually via mini-courses. We can also assist in developing the capacity to provide the offerings directly to affiliate members. For more information and support, contact Lisa Dickinson at [edickinson@aft.org](mailto:edickinson@aft.org).

## National Events

### The AFT's Center for School Improvement Leadership Institute

The Center for School Improvement Leadership Institute is the AFT's premier professional learning and technical assistance opportunity for strengthening collaboration skills with district and school improvement teams to raise student achievement. Teams attend this four-day national institute. In some cases, the AFT will host this professional learning program on site for large teams of educators in locals or states. Topics include: Communication Strategies for Collaboration, Team Building, Using Data, and Professional Learning.

## AFT Summer Educator Academy

This 10-day academy provides union-sponsored, research-based professional learning that addresses the complexities of teaching. Offered in July, the program is designed to help local unions build the capacity to deliver high-quality professional learning services to all educators—teachers, paraprofessionals and school-related personnel. Course offerings change from year to year, based on interest.

## AFT TEACH Conference

TEACH (Together Educating America's Children) is the AFT's signature professional learning conference that provides state-of-the-art presentations and explores forward-looking education initiatives. The conference attracts more than 1,500 participants, including AFT members, state and district administrators, school board members and representatives of the higher education, business and social services communities nationwide. The TEACH conference addresses current research and policy initiatives, features overviews of innovative work in education that educators need to know about, offers exciting demonstrations of the latest educational technology, highlights thought-provoking keynote speakers, and much more.

## Featured Courses

*Note: All prospective trainers are required to take this course prior to taking any AFT professional learning courses.*

### Delivering Effective Professional Development

This course will assist you in your role as a facilitator of learning and coordinator of a local professional development program. You will receive guidelines as to what an effective facilitator/trainer/presenter must know and do (e.g., presentation techniques, presentation strategies, planning professional development sessions) and tips on how to succeed with adult learners. It is our hope that the content of this course will support you in the preparation for your course practice presentations and local trainings.

Participants will also learn strategies on how to coordinate a local AFT Professional Learning Program and build local capacity for its growth and expansion.

**Intended audience:** *K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals*

#### Course objectives:

- **Present** the research-based course material effectively.
- **Utilize** presentation strategies and techniques that align with the needs of the adult learner.
- **Develop** and manage a professional development program and strategize to implement and support a professional learning system.



### Classroom Management/Behavior Foundations of Effective Teaching I: Organizing the Classroom Environment for Teaching and Learning

This core course addresses the fundamental aspects of teaching and learning that are relevant for teachers and instructional paraprofessionals in all grade levels and subject areas. It aligns nicely with many of the indicators on state and district wide teacher evaluation rubrics, and is particularly useful for training evaluators and mentor teachers who are responsible for providing support through peer assistance and review as well as induction programs for new teachers. Content in this course is designed to give educators the knowledge and skills needed to prepare students for college and careers. The course examines research-based concepts such as creating a positive classroom environment, increasing student engagement, maximizing learning time, interactive instruction and scaffolding techniques, questioning and giving feedback, and using homework to extend learning. Participants will reflect upon their own practices and set professional goals for improving their craft to meet students' needs. Foundations of Effective Teaching I is an essential part of any professional development program.

**Intended audience:** *PreK-12 teachers, instructional paraprofessionals, administrators, teacher/union leaders, mentors, coaches*

#### Course Objectives:

- **Explore** evidence-based practices related to classroom management, enhancing students' social and emotional growth, and increasing student engagement.
- **Make** connections between the research presented and professional standards for effective teaching.
- **Examine** strategies for maximizing both the quantity and quality of academic learning time.
- **Design** instruction, assignments and learning tasks aligned to academic content standards, and utilize cognitive strategies to support students in the learning process.
- **Acquire** strategies for using various types of feedback to improve learning.

## Managing Behavior in School Communities

Managing Behavior in School Communities is an AFT Professional Learning Program course that presents the most recent and seminal research on challenging student behavior. MBSC provides educators and other school personnel with effective strategies for managing unwanted behavior across a variety of learning environments. MBSC will provide teachers and support staff with the information, tools and skills they may need to prevent or eliminate challenging or anti-social behaviors and/or to manage much of this behavior when it occurs. The course reviews what is found in AFT's Foundations course, Beginning of the Year Classroom Management, and takes the research to the next level for students who do not respond to basic prevention through effective classroom management.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood educators, K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, after-school staff

### Course Objectives:

- **Establish** shared understanding of how to define, record and collect data on negative student behavior.
- **Utilize** research to establish the importance of social skills training and positive reinforcement as prevention and intervention tools.
- **Facilitate** understanding the role of bias, discipline disparities and race-neutral policies and their impact on diverse school communities.
- **Examine** the use of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) and de-escalation to foster healthy school climates.

## Managing Student Behavior for Support Staff

This course is designed for paraprofessionals and school-related personnel who have contact with and/or are responsible for overseeing the behavior and safety of large numbers of students outside the classroom setting, whether that setting is the cafeteria, school bus, office, playground or school corridors. The course will teach school-related personnel and paraprofessionals about how to manage large groups of students as well as difficult and disruptive students.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood educators, paraprofessionals, support staff, after-school staff

### Course Objectives:

- **Establish** shared understanding of how and when to define, record and collect data on negative student behavior in multiple learning environments.
- **Develop** strategies to support prevention and intervention strategies for students with negative behavior.
- **Focus** on behavior management skills for students in alternative and/or nontraditional settings.
- **Learn** research foundation for schoolwide behavior frameworks like positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS).



## Transitioning to Kindergarten (T2K) toolkit

A joint project of the AFT and the National Center for Learning Disabilities, this toolkit is a collection of resources designed specifically to address children's needs in the year before kindergarten. Pre-K educators attending the T2K workshop will explore the toolkit and discuss ways to incorporate it into their classrooms and share it with their colleagues. T2K provides a host of fun activities, family tip sheets, training materials and a screening tool for educators and parents. It focuses on the whole child, encompassing social and emotional learning, physical growth and development, math, reading and language development. T2K is available for free at [aft.org](http://aft.org).

**Intended audience:** Pre-K and kindergarten teachers and paraprofessionals, support staff, parents and families, after-school staff

### Course Objectives:

- **Establish** a shared understanding of the range of activities and resources offered in the Transitioning to Kindergarten toolkit.
- **Examine** developmental milestones that children reach during the year before kindergarten.
- **Facilitate** an understanding of the T2K tools for assessing a preschooler's learning progression.
- **Explore** how T2K resources can be used to engage the families of preschoolers.

“

I wish all my family members could attend this training because

this training  
says it all!

It is all about **raising  
balanced kids!**

Can you do another training so  
I can invite our community?

”



## Community/Family Involvement School, Family and Community: Partnerships That Support Student Learning

The primary function of this course is to help school staff understand how they can assist parents to better support their children as learners. Topics explored include (1) using effective communication strategies to develop learning partnerships with families; (2) designing more productive homework assignments to involve families; (3) explaining classroom work and grading systems to parents; (4) developing schoolwide parent involvement plans; and (5) examining the role of school absenteeism on student learning.

**Intended audience:** Teachers and paraprofessionals, support staff, parents and families, principals and superintendents

### Course Objectives:

- **Examine** the effect of societal changes on school, family and community relationships, and develop systems and processes that support student learning.
- **Explore** the attributes of resilient children and help families implement research-based supports to foster resiliency in children.

- **Identify** and utilize the basic principles of building an effective communication system.
- **Examine** schoolwide homework policies to craft effective homework practices.
- **Implement** successful school-community partnership programs.

## Community Schools 101: The Nuts and Bolts

As an educator, you know all too well that many of your students come to school with needs that impede their ability to learn. If we are serious about closing the achievement gap, we must address factors that are beyond the control of teachers and schools alone. Important factors such as healthcare, social services and parental involvement often are divorced from school life, although they are crucial to student success. The community schools strategy enables schools and communities to provide the necessary supports for students, families and communities. This course provides an overview of this strategy, including basic elements, core principles, research, community school results (academic and nonacademic), family and community engagement components, site- and system-level implementation, the collaborative leadership framework needed for successful implementation, and examples of successful community school initiatives.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, teacher/union leaders, administrators, after-school staff

### Course Objectives:

- **Deepen** understanding about the nuts and bolts of the community school strategy.
- **Understand** the various roles that unions and educators can play.
- **Participate** in role-playing activities on how to engage peers in conversations about community schools.
- **Map** out opportunities and barriers in moving this strategy in the community.

## Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

### Content Area Writing Instruction in the 6-12 Classroom

The ability to express thoughts, ideas and understanding through writing is a life skill and a critical component of writing within content area standards. In all content areas, students are expected to learn to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to purpose, task and audience. The writing standards address the expectations of content area writing as students progress through the secondary grades. The research on effective writing instruction stresses the importance of the recursive nature of writing and the interdependence of writing to learn and learning to write.

**Intended audience:** 6-12 teachers

#### Course Objectives:

- **Examine** the connection of effective writing instruction to relevant content area writing standards.
- **Review** research and recommendations regarding effective writing instruction within the content areas.
- **Engage** in the writing process within the content areas.
- **Understand** the relationship of learning to write and writing to learn in the secondary content areas: history/social studies, science and technical subjects, and English language arts.
- **Practice** engaging writing strategies you can use with your students tomorrow.

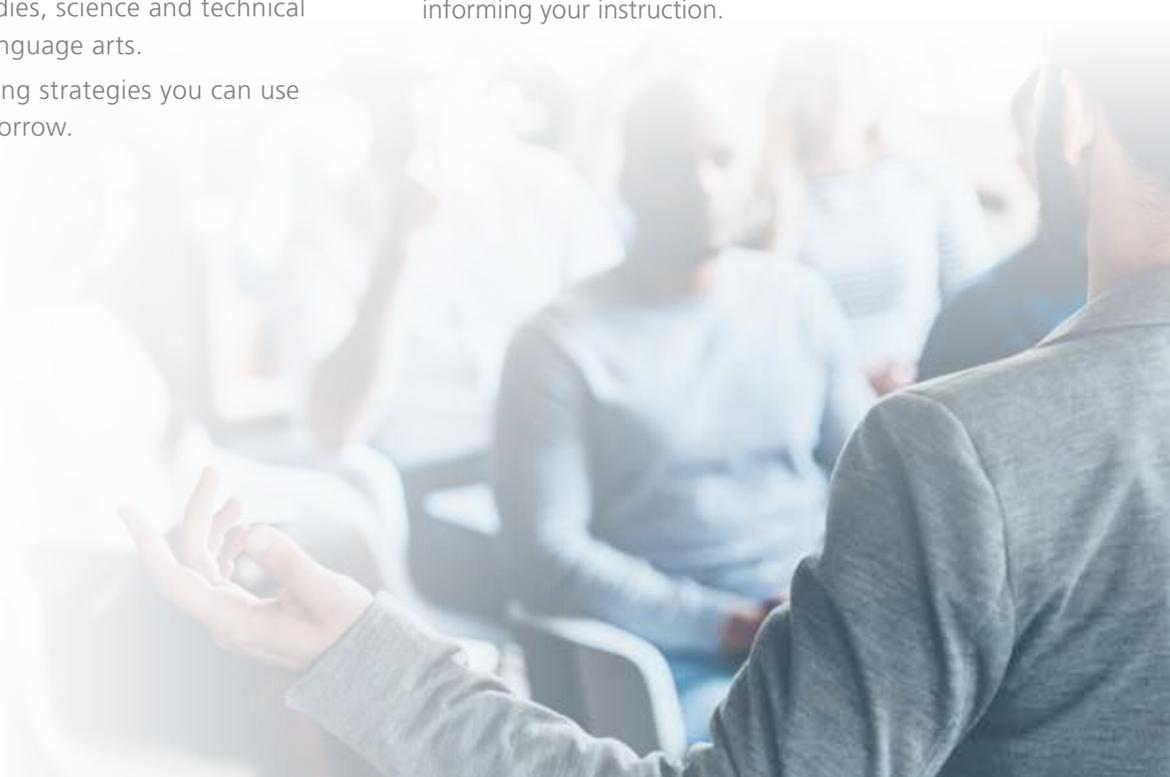
## Informing Instruction: Linking the Assessment Process to Teaching and Learning

Now, more than ever, it's important to understand how the various types of assessments can be used for different purposes. Most of our classrooms have students performing on many levels in different subjects. This reality makes it critical to understand how and how not to measure your students' growth—what assessments to use and how to analyze your data so that it informs instruction in a timely way for *all* of your students.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 teachers, paraprofessionals

#### Course Objectives:

- **Learn** how to create high-quality growth measures for every student.
- **Accurately identify** an appropriate student population for your targeted assessment.
- **Identify** the pros and cons of different types of assessment, including formative and summative assessments.
- **Learn** about the importance of baseline evidence.
- **Define** intervals of instruction.
- **Understand** the value of stretch, alignment, and validity and reliability in selecting or creating an assessment.
- **Assess** and identify the proper data to use in informing your instruction.



## Instructional Strategies That Work for All Disciplines

This course provides a cognitive research-based approach to lesson planning and design. To develop a comprehensive instructional plan, participants consider the concepts of standards, curriculum and a course map as they generate unit and lesson plans that promote independent learning for students. In this course, instructional strategies are taught in the context of purpose and appropriateness for supporting student learning. Course participants will learn how to develop scoring guides (rubrics) for student tasks, evaluate curriculum materials for any content area and create instructional plans that address the shortcomings of the materials. The information in this course can be applied in K-12 settings and is particularly helpful for students with special needs.

**Intended audience:** K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, teacher/union leaders, administrators

### Course Objectives:

- **Supplement** inadequate curriculums and pacing guides using six research-based strategies.
- **Create** cohesive lesson designs that minimize fragmented learning.
- **Decide** when and how to use the appropriate strategy to support student learning.
- **Design** the appropriate type of rubric for the task.

## Making Data and Classroom Assessments Work for You

In this course, participants will acquire the knowledge and tools they need to collect and use data, to understand the role of classroom assessments to improve schools, to inform instruction, and to advance learning individually and collaboratively. A free mini-course, *Appropriate Use of Assessments: An Introduction*, is available online at <https://aftelearning.org/assessments>.

**Intended audience:** K-12 teachers

### Course Objectives:

- **Discover** participants' current assumptions about data and begin to identify what the term "data" means.

- **Understand** two different types of assessment data and their uses and limitations.
- **Better** understand how to organize and use standards to help guide instruction and assessment.
- **Understand** how to select, develop and use high-quality classroom assessments.
- **Learn** how to analyze data to make informed decisions about school improvement and instruction.

## Meeting Writing Expectations K-5

The ability to express thoughts, ideas and understanding through writing is a life skill and a critical component of all writing standards. Students are expected to learn to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to purpose, task, audience and content. The writing standards stress collaboration and support from teachers and students, and the research stresses the importance of writing frequently, utilizing the writing process and writing to learn as well as learning to write.

**Intended audience:** K-5 teachers

### Course Objectives:

- **Examine** the connection of effective writing instruction to relevant writing standards.
- **Review** research and recommendations regarding effective writing instruction.
- **Engage** in the writing process.
- **Understand** the relationship of learning to write and writing to learn in the elementary grades (K-5)
- **Practice** engaging writing strategies you can use with your students tomorrow.



## Instructional Supports for All Learners

### 10 Trauma-Informed Strategies to Help Students Heal

Participants will learn and practice 10 research-based trauma-informed practices to boost student resilience. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how adversity can impact children's developing brains, bodies and behaviors. They will also explore primary prevention strategies that promote healing after various traumatic events. The remote delivery format does not cover all AFT "student trauma" course content. Rather, this *special edition* offers immediately applicable concepts with attention to the global coronavirus pandemic. The remote course is not modular; trainers and participants are expected to complete all five sessions in order.

**Intended audience:** *Mainstream educators with some to no experience with trauma-informed practices, as well as seasoned practitioners looking for a refresher on the specific science of healing after crisis events. This is not designed to deepen the skill sets of specialized instructional support providers whose work includes secondary and tertiary prevention. This is not a train-the-trainer course.*

#### Course Objectives:

- **Analyze** behavior for signs of the toxic stress response.
- **Explain** inter-relationships between resilience, (personal, relational and social) protective factors and psychological wellness.
- **Explain** unique challenges to wellness found in the education field.
- **List** common trauma triggers and their behavioral manifestations.
- **Identify** risk factors for developing mental illness following a crisis event.
- **Identify** common manifestations of grief in children at different developmental stages.
- **Identify** the impact of oppression on young people.
- **Evaluate** approaches to disrupt and dismantle systems of oppression.
- **Clarify** the values that undergird a trauma-informed approach.
- **Identify** restorative practices that change inappropriate behavior.

## Creating a Supportive Learning Environment Through Social Emotional Learning

Are you looking for ways to assist your students in managing their emotions, building positive relationships with others and making responsible decisions? In this mini-course, participants will identify and share developmentally appropriate, research-based strategies that foster students' social and emotional growth. In addition, we will examine best practices for creating and cultivating a positive beginning of the school year. This course is based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 educators, paraprofessionals and specialized instructional support personnel

### Course Objectives:

- **Articulate** the latest research findings and policy recommendations on how learning happens in supportive learning environments where social, emotional and academic development are integrated;
- **Identify** and share developmentally appropriate, research-based strategies that foster student growth in the five competencies outlined in CASEL's framework for social emotional learning; and,
- **Apply** new knowledge through self-reflection, goal setting and action planning.

## Student Trauma

Children face many adverse childhood experiences—violence, abuse, neglect, loss and more. The result can be psychological trauma, which interrupts healthy development. The American Federation of Teachers offers school-based union members an opportunity to become trainers in trauma-informed practices with “Student Trauma.”

Facilitators use case studies, discussion, guided practice, diverse media, embedded practice, reflection activities and more to deeply engage participants.

**Intended audience:** Mainstream educators with some to no experience with trauma-informed practices, as well as seasoned practitioners looking for a refresher on the specific science of healing after crisis events.

### Course Objectives:

- **Develop** content expertise in psychological trauma; understand how exposure to violence impacts children's brains, bodies and behaviors;
- **Practice** several primary prevention strategies to protect children from the impact of violence exposure and to promote healthy childhood development; and
- **Learn** steps toward building a trauma-informed school, including lessons from other AFT affiliates.

Course participants become trainers by practicing delivery and demonstrating content expertise. Trainers are also expected to deliver workshops, for example, through their school, district and/or union.



## Teaching for Engaged Learning

Schools and educators are facing many unprecedented challenges today due to the coronavirus pandemic. While transitioning classrooms to virtual learning environments, keep in mind that raising the performance levels of all students, attending to equity and access, creating safe havens for learning, and preparing students for life beyond the classroom are still the ultimate goals! As the learning needs of today's students become increasingly more diverse, Teaching for Engaged Learning explores ways to integrate, both cognitive and social learning to optimize student performance and enhance teacher effectiveness.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 educators and instructional paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel

- **The Classroom Management Puzzle: Putting the Pieces Together**

Whether your classroom is virtual, physical or a mixture of both, using time efficiently and supporting students' academic and behavioral needs are essential. Join this two-part session to explore and share multiple approaches for establishing and maintaining routines, co-regulating student behavior, and reflecting upon how classroom management affects student progress. Participants will also learn strategies to reflect upon their own practices and set goals to effect change.

**Course Objectives:**

- **Design** and implement classroom procedures and routines for virtual and physical learning settings in order to increase instructional time.
- **Utilize** multiple strategies for creating a classroom management system that includes clear behavior expectations, positive reinforcement and co-regulation.



- **Every Child Needs a Champion: Unlock Your Ability to Build Online Caring Relationships**

Are you looking for ways to refresh and renew relationships with your students? Regardless of whether you are teaching virtually or in person, cultivating positive teacher-student relationships is key. This course explores ways to unlock the power of care in building and sustaining safe and supportive learning communities and attending to individual students' academic and emotional well-being.

**Course Objectives:**

- **Apply** a variety of approaches to building and sustaining caring relationships with and among students.
- **Reflect** upon their own practices and design a plan for improving and strengthening relationships with individuals or groups of students in their classrooms.



- **What You Get Is What You Expect**

How do teacher expectations influence student performance, attitudes and behaviors? What messages are communicated to individuals or groups of students through our instructional practices, the way in which feedback is provided, and the quality and quantity of teacher-student interactions? This session will take you on an introspective journey to examine how the self-fulfilling prophecy may be unintentionally leading to negative expectation effects.

**Course Objectives:**

- **Use** self-reflection to assess their own beliefs and how they affect student outcomes.
- **Apply** strategies to encourage and support high expectations for all students.

- **Real Talk**

Expressing ideas, valuing diverse views and communicating respectfully are all skills necessary for success in life and career. This course provides attendees with a mix of strategies to promote meaningful discussion across content areas, elevate student voice and input, and welcome multiple perspectives and opinions.

**Course Objectives:**

- **Select** and implement techniques for explicitly teaching speaking and listening skills across content and learning experiences.
- **Use** sentence stems as a way to support students in communicating effectively.

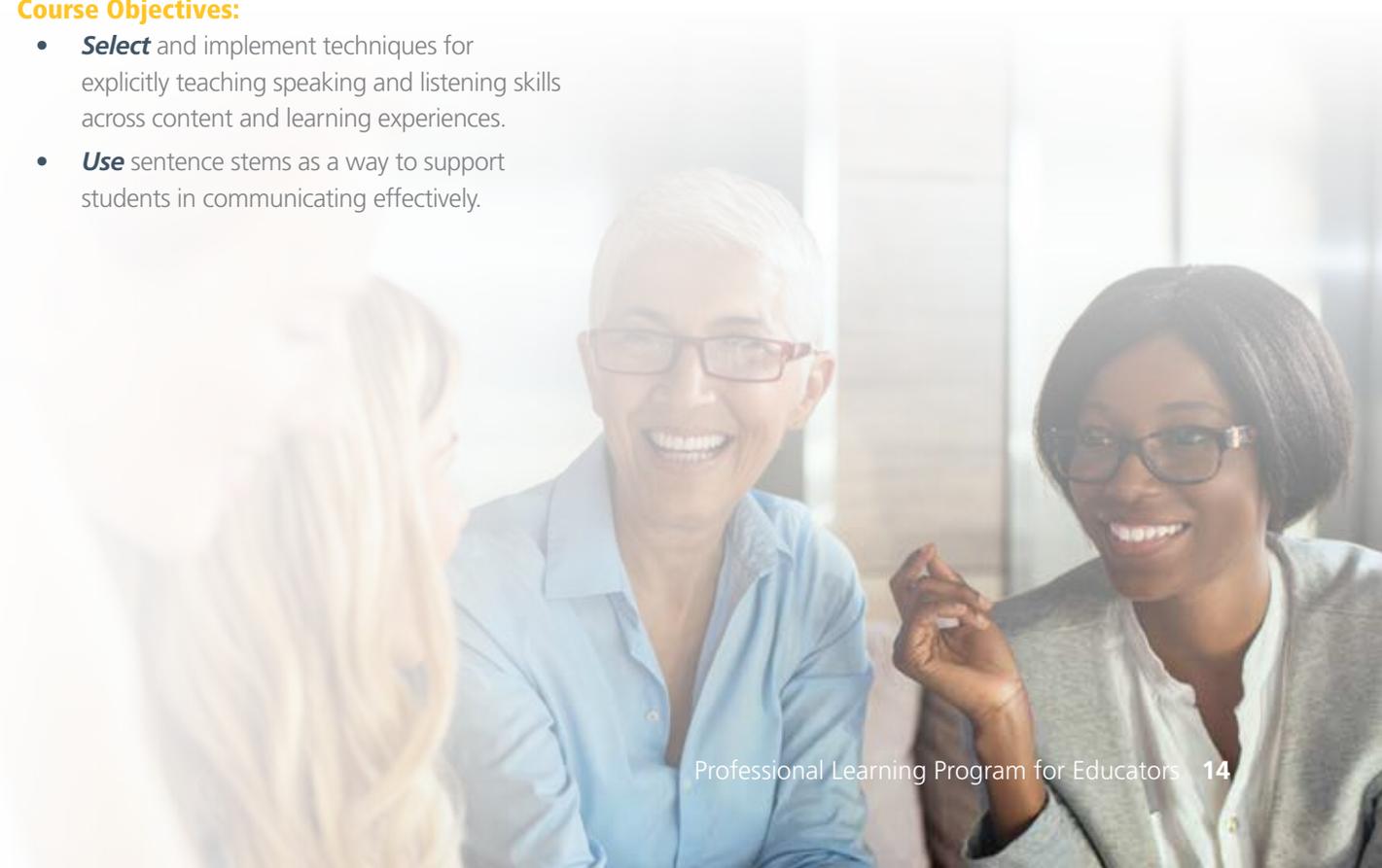
## Universal Design for Learning: Everyone Learns Differently

Do you want to maximize your students' learning experiences? With the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, you can learn to set clear goals, anticipate barriers and design lessons to reduce those barriers for all. This interactive mini-course will lead you to use cognitive neuroscience as a foundation for designing instruction to best meet the needs of your diverse learners. Upon completion, you will feel confident, prepared and excited to begin your school year equipped to construct meaningful learning experiences for all!

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 educators, instructional paraprofessionals

**Course Objectives:**

- **Use** learner variability as a way to understand and address individual students' learning needs;
- **Apply** principles of Universal Design to reduce barriers for students in the school environment, assessments, methods and materials; and
- **Create** student-centered lesson plans and learning experiences using the Universal Design Framework and Guidelines.



## Math

### Thinking Mathematics K-2

This beginning Thinking Math course focuses on research about how children learn mathematics and implications of these findings for the classroom. TM K-2 has been redesigned to help teachers understand the content and practice standards of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and their connection to the research. Ten Principles capture practices that lead to a better understanding of math for all students and are applicable at all grade levels. The principles—which deal with ideas such as tapping what students know, helping them visualize problems, and building the expectation and ability to justify their work—are exemplified through the research on counting, addition and subtraction. The course takes a broad look at the importance of recognizing and using patterns and relationships throughout math, addresses the kind of questioning that promotes thinking in math class, and provides a framework for implementing curriculum and lessons.

This course focuses on research about how children learn mathematics and implications of these findings for the K-2 classroom.

**Intended audience:** K-2 teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches, teacher/union leaders

#### Course Objectives:

- **Gain** a deeper understanding of today's rigorous content standards, the mathematical practices and how attention to both is necessary for success.
- **Learn** the Ten Principles of math instruction drawn from research, including tapping knowledge students already have, helping them visualize and model problems, stressing both concepts and procedure, and building the expectation and ability to reason mathematically.
- **Connect** these principles to specific content: counting, place value, addition and subtraction, solving word problems, fundamental structures of mathematics and developing number sense.
- **Discuss** the roles of teachers in helping students succeed with mathematics, e.g. posing questions that promote thinking, planning coherent instruction, and selecting appropriate tasks at the appropriate level.

# “ Thinking Math

is really assisting me in moving from being a good reflective teacher/leader to a great reflective teacher/

# leader in math!”



## Thinking Mathematics 3-5

Designed for the upper-elementary grade band, this course focuses not only on research findings about how children learn multiplication and division of whole numbers but also on the struggles students have with fraction concepts and computation. Logically extending concepts learned in whole number work to fractions can lessen the cognitive load and help students make sense of them. The course begins with a brief introduction to the Ten Principles of Thinking Mathematics instruction; using these principles leads to a better understanding of mathematics by all students. It focuses on the mathematical practices (habits of mind students develop and use as they learn math), which are now part of nearly all rigorous mathematics standards, including Common Core. Multiple representations and strategies are used to develop a deep understanding of multiplication and division. As the distributive property becomes visible, students make connections to the traditional algorithms. Participants learn ways to help students understand fractions as single numbers that can be represented on the number line. This helps them to develop a sense of fraction magnitude so they can make sense of problems and whether answers are reasonable.

This course focuses not only on research findings about how children learn multiplication and division of whole numbers but also on fraction concepts and computation.

“Thinking  
Math

has changed the way I teach, think, and

learn math!

”



**Intended audience:** Grades 3-5 teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches, teacher/union leaders

### Course Objectives:

- **Gain** a deeper understanding of today's rigorous content standards for intermediate students, the mathematical practices and how content and practices intertwine to create success.
- **Learn** the Ten Principles of math instruction drawn from research, including tapping knowledge students already have, helping them visualize and model problems, stressing both concept and procedure, encouraging multiple solution strategies, and building the expectation and ability to reason about and discuss their mathematical work.
- **Discuss** multiple representations and strategies that develop a deep understanding of multiplication and division prior to connecting to traditional algorithms; connect concepts and strategies to work with fractions.
- **Learn** how to help students understand fractions as single numbers that can be represented on the number line to make sense of fraction magnitude and whether answers are reasonable.
- **Understand** the importance of questioning and discussion in math class, levels of cognitive demand in tasks and what more rigorous goals for students require of teaching.

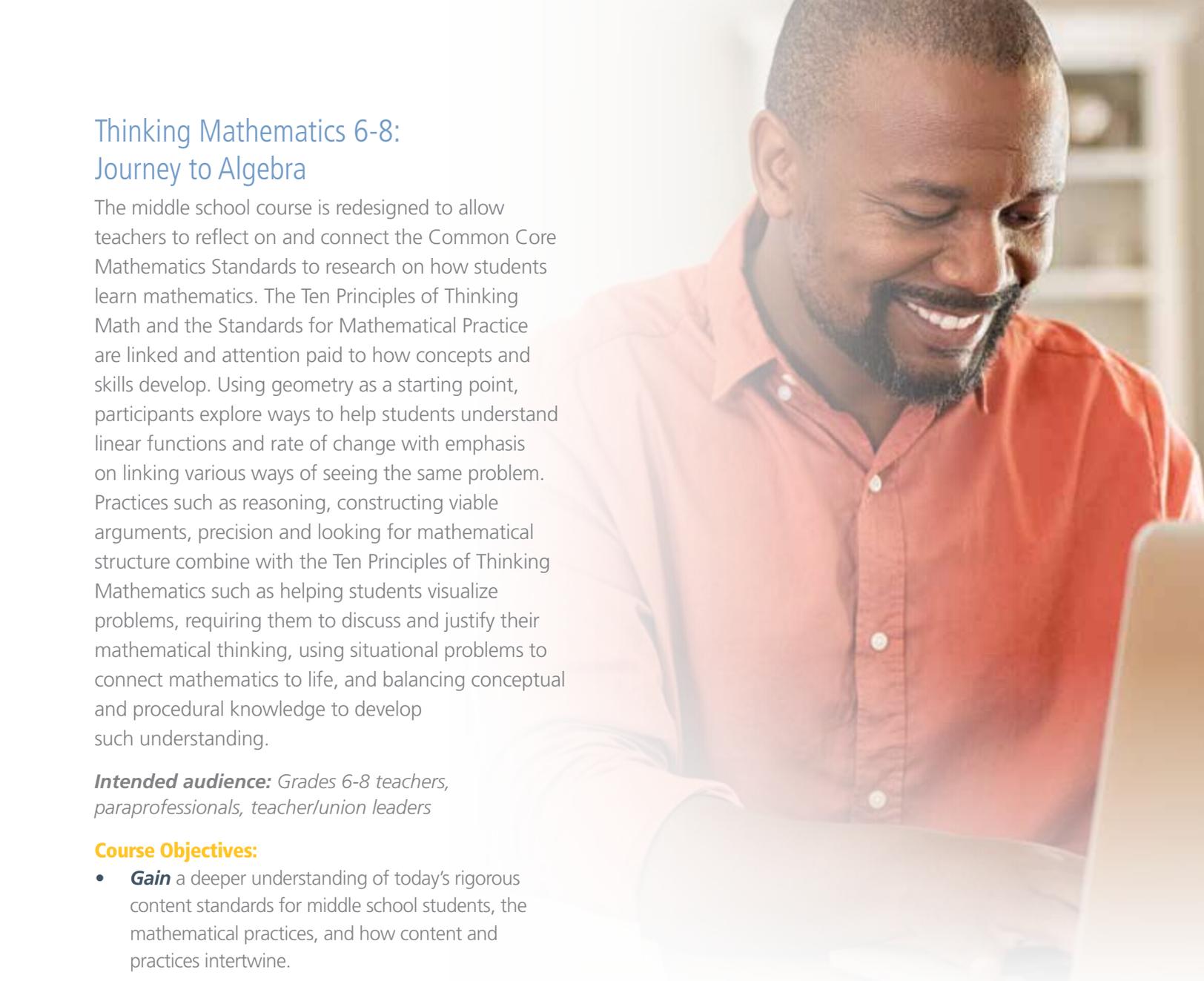
## Thinking Mathematics 6-8: Journey to Algebra

The middle school course is redesigned to allow teachers to reflect on and connect the Common Core Mathematics Standards to research on how students learn mathematics. The Ten Principles of Thinking Math and the Standards for Mathematical Practice are linked and attention paid to how concepts and skills develop. Using geometry as a starting point, participants explore ways to help students understand linear functions and rate of change with emphasis on linking various ways of seeing the same problem. Practices such as reasoning, constructing viable arguments, precision and looking for mathematical structure combine with the Ten Principles of Thinking Mathematics such as helping students visualize problems, requiring them to discuss and justify their mathematical thinking, using situational problems to connect mathematics to life, and balancing conceptual and procedural knowledge to develop such understanding.

**Intended audience:** Grades 6-8 teachers, paraprofessionals, teacher/union leaders

### Course Objectives:

- **Gain** a deeper understanding of today's rigorous content standards for middle school students, the mathematical practices, and how content and practices intertwine.
- **Learn** Ten Principles of Thinking Mathematics drawn from research such as tapping intuitive knowledge, helping students visualize and model problems, stressing both concept and procedure, encouraging multiple solution strategies, and building the expectation and ability to reason mathematically and discuss their mathematical thinking.
- **Experience** strategies applied to specific content: ratio and proportion, fractions, expressions and equations, and linear functions.
- **Be immersed** in a variety of ways to think about linear functions and rate of change to better support students who think differently and link various ways of seeing the same problem.
- **Connect** to real life situations to help students see the usefulness of mathematics.



“ TM 6-8

is the most engaging math PD I have ever attended.  
Nothing else comes close to the quality and relevance to

middle  
school math  
teaching.”

## Reading

### Beginning Reading Instruction

Beginning Reading Instruction focuses on how children learn to read and the best ways to teach reading from kindergarten to the end of the primary grades. Because the course contains considerable information on how students develop basic decoding skills, it is also useful for teachers and support staff working with older students who are having difficulty with decoding and fluency. The course presents a synthesis of the research consensus for beginning reading instruction, and it provides the most effective instructional strategies—aligned to that research—to help students develop print awareness, phonemic awareness, knowledge of the alphabetical system, phonics/decoding skills, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

*Intended audience: K-5 teachers*

#### Course Objectives:

- **Develop** a deeper understanding of the many components of the reading process.
- **Examine** the requirements of literacy content standards: regular practice with complex texts; using evidence from text when reading, writing and speaking; attending to academic vocabulary; and building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.
- **Make** connections between the research presented and effective instructional strategies in reading.
- **Learn** and practice research-based instructional strategies for each of the components of beginning reading.
- **Reflect** on existing reading curricula and practices, to better understand when to revise or supplement.

“Great research based strategies

for all students having trouble with

decoding and fluency.”

### Reading Comprehension Instruction

Reading Comprehension Instruction focuses on the research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong reading comprehension skills. RCI is appropriate for all K-12 teachers and support staff who need to help increase their students' comprehension of text—whether that text is a literature selection or informational text. The course provides participants with a synthesis of the research base on reading comprehension instruction and vocabulary development. Participants examine, discuss and evaluate the appropriate application of a range of instructional strategies from explicit to implicit teaching of comprehension skills. Strategies are presented for increasing student comprehension of both narrative and expository texts. In addition, participants learn how to help students self-monitor comprehension and apply appropriate “fix-up” strategies when comprehension is not achieved. Practice in using instructional strategies and examples of student work are embedded in the course.

*Intended audience: K-12 teachers*

### Course Objectives:

- **Develop** an understanding of research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong comprehension and vocabulary skills.
- **Examine** the requirements of literacy content standards: regular practice with complex texts; using evidence from text when reading, writing and speaking; attending to academic vocabulary; and building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.
- **Understand** the nature of narrative text and expository text and how they can both aid and hinder comprehension.
- **Learn** how to build and support dialogic discourse in classrooms through student-centered strategies to support comprehension.
- **Recognize** and reflect on the relationship between comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.

## Science

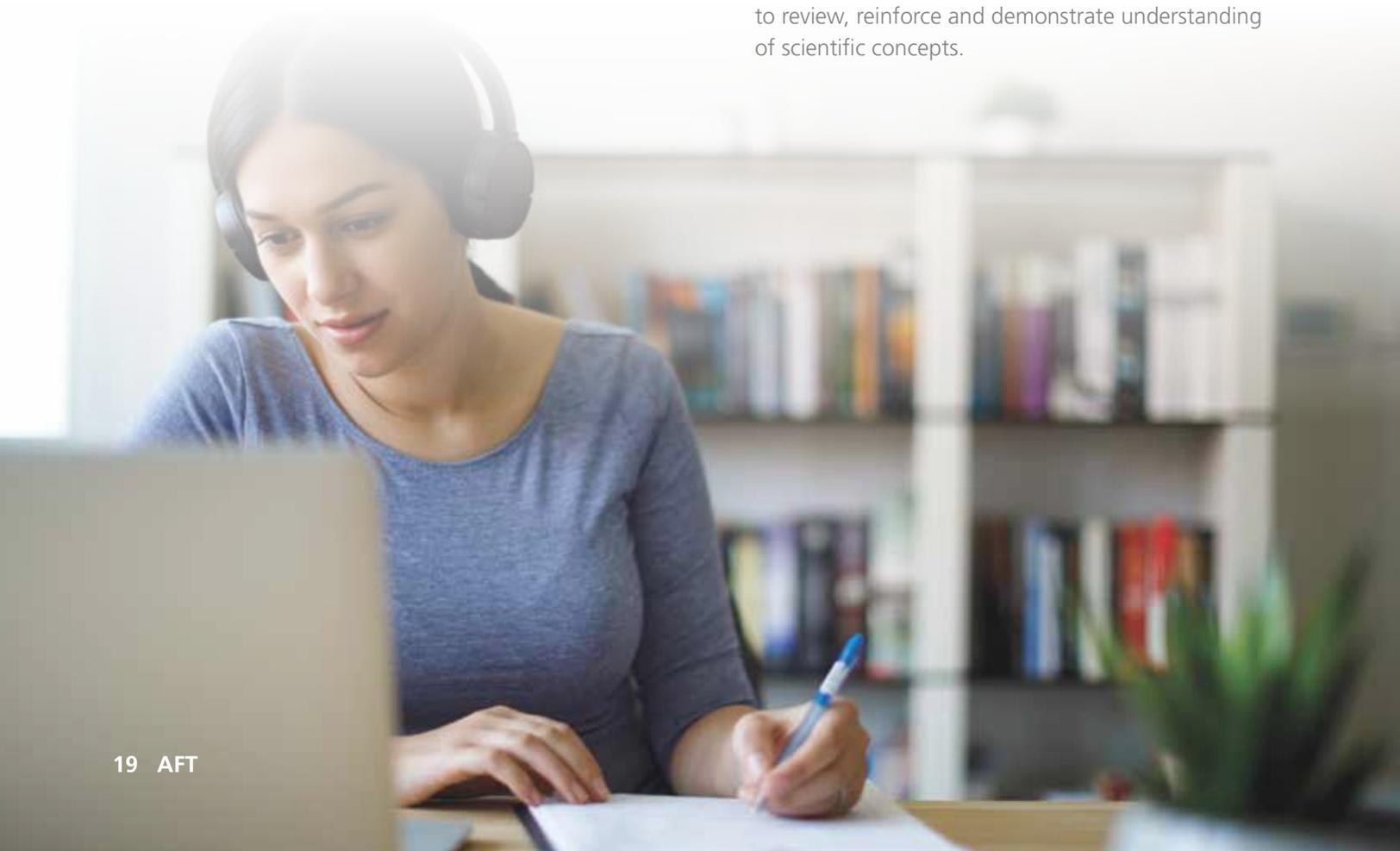
### Make Your Virtual Science POP!

Are you looking for ways to make science pop for your virtual learners? How can Padlets, escape rooms, Flipgrids, Jamboards and green screen magic be used to engage students in meaningful learning across all science disciplines and grade spans? To find the answers to these questions and more, join us for Make Your Virtual Science POP! Participants will get easy-to-implement, practical strategies and ideas for inspiring budding scientists virtually.

**Intended audience:** *Appropriate for grades K-6; middle school/high school science educators; While focused on science content, the tools are universal and can be used with any subject matter.*

### Course Objectives:

- **Incorporate** scientific phenomena into virtual science lessons to sparks student dialogue and sense-making;
- **Use** a variety of electronic tools to develop an interactive Google slide deck specific to their science content and grade span; and
- **Design** a virtual escape room that allows students to review, reinforce and demonstrate understanding of scientific concepts.





## Special Needs

### Accessible Literacy Framework

How does one provide reading instruction to students with developmental or intellectual disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy or Down syndrome? This course is grounded in the premise that reading is at the center of most activities—in and out of school. The essential components of reading instruction—phonological awareness, sound blending, initial phoneme segmentation, letter-sound correspondence, decoding and shared reading—will be covered and framed to address emerging literacy needs of students with complex communication needs. This course is designed specifically for educators and school staff who are responsible for providing and/or adapting materials for students with disabilities who have complex communication needs, use assistive technology to access curriculum, or require adaptive materials to participate in a learning environment. Course participants will learn specific strategies designed to augment existing curriculums or to serve independently as a literacy tool to reach this academically underserved and challenging student population.

**Intended audience:** *Early childhood educators, K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, teacher/union leaders, after-school staff*

#### Course Objectives:

- **Provide** research-based practices on providing early literacy for development for children with complex communication needs, with intellectual disabilities, or at-risk learners.
- **Examine** the use of augmented or assistive technology to access curriculum.
- **Explore** how to adapt content for a variety of pre-emerging readers.
- **Makes** strategies available to educators and support staff that will help them provide pre-readers with complex communication needs or intellectual disabilities or at-risk learners access to academic content.

“ I learned how to  
use complex text with all readers in a way that provides  
**opportunity for**  
**success.** ”

## Introduction to English Language Learners (ELL 101)

ELL 101 has six components:

- **Component One:** Policy and Advocacy
- **Component Two:** Second Language Acquisition and Learning
- **Component Three:** Connecting Culture and Student Achievement
- **Component Four:** Language and Literacy
- **Component Five:** Planning for Student Success
- **Component Six:** Increasing Family Engagement

This course is designed to provide pre-K-12 mainstream educators with the preliminary information and tools they need to begin meeting the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. Topics cover a broad base of areas related to meeting the needs of ELLs. The information across the components will enhance the instructional practices that mainstream educators of ELLs are currently implementing and expand their repertoire by introducing new research-based strategies.

Providing equitable access to grade-level standards, connecting research to practice, and applying new learning to educators' unique students and educational settings are overarching themes in this course.

The principles and practices examined throughout the course are focused on English learners; however, they are easily applicable to and necessary for a wide range of students. Engaging participants to reach a deeper understanding of the connections between cultural proficiency and academic achievement is another central theme of ELL 101.

The course is not meant as a comprehensive specialization course on English-as-a-Second-Language knowledge and methods. Course participants are encouraged to delve deeper into areas of interest and further research on what works for their particular ELL population. The course is designed to be interactive and build supportive relationships among educators.



“ Every educator should have this experience. As we change globally, we should be

**better prepared**

to teach ELL students.”

### Course Objectives:

- Increase knowledge of state and federal laws that ensure services for ELLs;
- Examine research-based instructional strategies to optimize academic learning for ELLs;
- Develop an understanding of second language acquisition to increase awareness of students' strengths and empathy for their needs;
- Improve participants' ability to meet the diverse needs of ELLs and increase their academic achievement;
- Identify strategies to differentiate and scaffold instruction to help students access learning along the stages of language acquisition;
- Discern myths and misconceptions about immigrants;
- Connect the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of ELLs with their academic needs;
- Identify ways to draw on students' knowledge as a resource;
- Define culture and cultural proficiency;
- Discuss ways of implementing culturally responsive teaching practices;
- Discuss institutional and societal structures that limit access and equity;
- Assess the impact of culture on learning;
- Analyze and describe ways that culture can be used to enhance learning and academic achievement;
- Identify current research findings on what works for ELL literacy development;
- Apply ELL literacy research to best practices in literacy curriculum and instruction for ELLs;
- Demonstrate strategies that develop literacy skills and reading comprehension for ELLs;
- Describe assessment strategies that provide diagnostic feedback on ELLs' reading skills and comprehension of text;
- Experience the unit planning process with differentiation strategies for language and culture;
- Examine best practices and strategies for the effective assessment of ELLs;
- Develop a differentiated, standards-based curriculum and instruction plan;

- Identify and describe the difference between parent engagement and parent involvement;
- Identify and recommend meaningful strategies to strengthen parental engagement;
- Create an effective parent engagement plan to target specific academic outcomes for ELL;
- Experience instructional strategies designed to increase academic language production and content comprehension; and
- Reflect on changes in professional practice as related to ELLs.

“ Great ideas for  
**working with all  
students.**

Information was relevant and informative.  
Resources and strategies ... will be

**useful in any  
content area**

and in a wide range of student demographics and  
academic levels.

”

## Customized Professional Learning to Meet Diverse Teaching and Learning Needs

Every day, across the nation, educators are implementing academic standards in new and challenging ways. They are looking for strategies and instructional practices that they can learn and apply right away in their classrooms. The AFT's Instructional Supports Workshops are designed to meet this need.

Each module is designed to last three-four hours and is suitable for a variety of audiences.

***Note:** There are direct references made to the college and career-ready standards in these modules. However, the strategies provided are based on research around good instructional practices regardless of the standards being implemented.*

### Instructional Supports: Formative Assessments

The role of data literacy and summative and formative assessments in the classroom is important. Even more important is understanding which assessment methods to use, and when to use them, to gather dependable information about student achievement. High-quality formative assessment must be very deliberate and intentional.

***Intended audience:** K-12 teachers*

#### Course Objectives:

- **Understand** the importance of data literacy.
- **Understand** the importance of summative and formative assessments and how they are used.
- **Apply** formative assessment strategies.
- **Explore** effective feedback.
- **Discuss** the role of classroom assessments in standards-based instruction.



“ I now understand the difference and importance of formative and summative assessment.

They are both valuable when collecting data points for looking at more than a final test score.





About one out of every 10 public school students in the United States right now is

# learning to speak English.

They're called ELLs, for 'English language learners.' There are nearly 5 million of them, and educating them—in English and all the other subjects and skills they'll need—is one of the biggest challenges in U.S. public education today.



—*Claudio Sanchez, ASCD, March 2017*

## Instructional Supports: English Language Learners

This module provides approaches and practical ideas for literacy development. Teachers will be provided research-based strategies, best practices and accommodations for working with ELL students. Connections to teacher evaluation rubrics will also be applied.

**Intended audience:** *K-12 teachers*

### Course Objectives:

- **Learn** about the supports ELLs will need to meet the college and career-ready standards.
- **Learn** about new roles for teachers and educators of ELLs in the era of the college and career-ready standards.
- **Learn** about strategies and resources for helping ELLs succeed.
- **Discuss** the components of a lesson plan tailored for ELLs, and get information on online resources for ELLs.

## Instructional Supports: Considerations for Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings

Students with disabilities must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers. This module provides a historic perspective on the identification of high-incidence disabilities, the use of evidence-based strategies focused on students' strengths and removing barriers to rigorous curriculum through the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Participants will use the case-study method to develop appropriate accommodations and modifications to support student access to grade-level academic content.

**Intended audience:** *Early childhood educators, K-12 regular and special educators, instructional paraprofessionals, support personnel, administrators, parents, teacher/union leaders, after-school staff*

### Course Objectives:

- **Identify** districtwide supports needed to ensure equal access to standards-based instruction for students with disabilities (SWDs) in inclusive settings.
- **Examine** characteristics and appropriate scaffolds for students with disabilities taught in inclusive classrooms.
- **Recognize** the difference between an accommodation and a modification when instructing SWDs.
- **Use** Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a framework for implementing a range of evidence-based strategies, appropriate accommodations and assistive technologies to include students with disabilities in standards-based instruction.

### Instructional Supports: Differentiating Instruction

Most contemporary classrooms serve students who learn at different rates, in different ways, come to school with different experiences, have different interests, demonstrate different levels of motivation and represent different language groups. Yet, instruction in many classrooms overlooks these differences and treats students as if they were essentially alike.

This session is designed both to raise awareness of research that supports differentiation and to teach the basic components of differentiation. Three frameworks will be considered: Tomlinson's, Conklin's and Sternberg's. The goal of the session is to help teachers reflect on strengths of their current instructional practices and explore opportunities for further growth in teaching academically diverse students.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, teacher/union leaders, administrators, after-school staff

### Course Objectives:

- **Design** a tiered lesson to meet students' needs, using the key components of Carolyn Tomlinson's model of differentiation.
- **Create** a tiered lesson based on Robert Sternberg's triarchic model.
- **Create** a choice board based on Wendy Conklin's model.



The information presented on strengths of students with specific

# learning disabilities,

ADHD and Asperger's syndrome helped me gain a better understanding of

# how to meet their needs

in the classroom.



## Strategies for Student Success

This high-quality, research-based professional learning program consists of three hourlong modules that create a manageable way to connect with educators. The SSS modules address teaching and learning in a way that benefits both new and veteran teachers. The content in the modules can be tailored to benefit individuals, groups and the whole school.

SSS approaches professional development and learning from an issues-based perspective. Whether the need is created by policy, mandates, feedback on evaluations or professional inquiry, SSS responds. Content is taught with activities that require reflection on daily practice, debate over research and current practices, utilizing modeling and experiential learning approaches. Engaged discussions augment the relevance of the research-based classroom strategies, and instruction is designed to facilitate immediate use.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, teacher/union leaders, administrators, after-school staff

“  
Applicable to  
all educators,

and I can implement in my job setting immediately.”

## Module Objectives:

- **Deliver** high-quality professional learning in manageable chunks of time.
- **Foster** collaboration on teaching and learning among stakeholders.
- **Provide** supports to help educators meet the indicators on their evaluations.
- **Be ongoing** and not just a single event.

## Student Learning Objectives

If your district is using or planning to use a process for measuring student growth that includes selecting an assessment, setting learning goals, and conferencing with the evaluator about student growth—even if the process is not called student learning objectives (SLO)—then this training will be important to your local/members.

If your district is currently using an SLO process that your members have been trained to use, this online course is a good way to allow new hires to understand the process or as a refresher for veteran educators. Participants in this workshop will receive the knowledge and resources needed to be able to have an in-depth understanding of each of the components of an SLO and engage in the development of one for their own use. Fully understanding the SLO process will give participants the confidence to take control of it and ensure its use as a tool for success in the classroom as well as a way to demonstrate their impact on student learning.

**Intended audience:** PreK-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, union leaders, administrators, local council members

## Course Objectives:

- **Develop** an understanding of the true intent of SLOs.
- **Make** connections between SLOs and daily instruction.
- **Write** an authentic and meaningful SLO that will guide instruction for your students.
- **Be empowered** to use your student growth data as a driver of your evaluation conversations.

## Online Resources

### Colorín Colorado

[www.colorincolorado.org](http://www.colorincolorado.org)

When English language learners are placed in mainstream classrooms, it can be a huge challenge for the students and for the educators—whether a mainstream teacher, a paraprofessional or a veteran ESL instructor. This workshop highlights resources, materials and the latest research to help reach out to ELL families and learn more about literacy skills, academic content and English language acquisition at the same time. The workshop also introduces attendees to the free online materials available on the Colorín Colorado website co-produced by the AFT and PBS station WETA, which provides preK-12 educators of ELLs of all language backgrounds a high-quality, research-based resource.

### E-Learning

<https://aftelearning.org>

Our AFT e-learning site is a professional learning network for all AFT members. Through this web-based platform, educators are able to access content to help them learn new techniques and skills and to get tips that will help them create classroom environments that foster student success. The AFT's e-learning site also provides a space where educators can connect with their peers and colleagues from around the country and access support, the latest research and more.

The site hosts a variety of professional learning opportunities, including webinars, self-paced courses and blended learning. Topics range from student learning objectives to the appropriate uses of assessments for educators. Affiliates can contribute to the site by adding their online offerings to the platform or announcing face-to-face offerings that will be available to members in their districts.

## Share My Lesson

<https://sharemylesson.com>

The AFT's free award-winning lesson-sharing website provides support for anyone who works with students as well as a place to collaborate on new ideas and best practices to enhance the profession and the larger community. With more than 1.7 million members, Share My Lesson is where teachers, parents and school staff can:

- **Find** thousands of standards-aligned, preK-12 lesson plans, activities and professional development webinars that span the curriculum and content areas;
- **Access** high-quality resources from content partners like ADL, Colorín Colorado, Facing History and Ourselves, First Book, iCivics, Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, PBS NewsHour Extra, and Teaching Tolerance;
- **Participate** in discussions via communities, and get resources for issues like bullying prevention, social emotional learning, engaging parents, meeting the needs of diverse English language learners and helping students cope with traumatic events;
- **Search** lessons by grade and subject; and
- **Contribute** their finest, most effective work to support colleagues across the country.







*A Union of Professionals*

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO  
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-879-4400



Item number: 39-0121001