

Abstract

Ulster BOCES proposes to provide professional development to teachers and librarians in Ulster County on the integration of technology into instruction and learning. The center of this project will be Kingston High School (KHS), a Focus school, and project objectives are designed to address the need for improvement in student achievement. The work will focus on Social Studies and Math, in particular Global Studies and Algebra, based on student performance data in those subject areas. Literacy skills are needed across the curriculum; therefore ELA objectives are included.

The project is designed to support professional development for teachers throughout our county (including public and non-public schools), and to provide targeted coaching, mentoring, and support on the use of technology to support instruction in the Focus school, Kingston High School. All public and non-public schools in the county were invited to participate in a survey with regard to use of technology for instruction and collaboration as well as goals concerning student achievement. These surveys helped determine the topics for the planned county-wide PD.

The project has three objectives: **Objective 1:** Kingston High School will increase student performance in ELA and Math incrementally over the 3 year grant period such that student achievement will increase by 10% by June 2018; **Objective 2:** To improve student access to technology resources inside and outside of the classroom to increase student achievement; and **Objective 3:** Provide professional development and one on one coaching to teachers to effectively integrate technology and inquiry skills into the curriculum to meet student needs.

Experienced specialists will provide sustained, targeted support to teachers in KHS. This will include individual coaching based on in-classroom observation and group work during common planning time. The targeted work will involve three math teachers, three social studies teachers, the two school librarians, and four Technology Liaisons from different departments in the building. The training received will include but not be limited to: how to set up blended learning environments for students; how to embed technological enhancements and inquiry into lesson design; how to guide students in finding resources online and how to be critical of and evaluate those resources; and how to use Moodle and Office 365 to collaborate and to guide student collaboration. This work will be targeted to meet the needs of the teachers to embed technology into instructional practice. The purpose of the work of the instructional specialists is to coach teachers by strategically assessing and monitoring the progress of integrating technology into their lessons and support materials with their students. The specialists are focusing on teacher improvement and will set attainable goals with the teachers. This work will be sustained throughout the three year grant period, with sixty days work of two specialists allocated to year one, followed by seventy-eight days of work in years two and three.

County-wide work includes four full-day professional development sessions in year one, addressing the topics: "Creating a Culture of Collaboration through Technology"; "Using Technology in Face-to-Face Instruction"; "Creating Hands-On Learning Experiences"; and "Technology Based Assessment". By the end of the first session, teachers will form Moodle-based support groups to post best practices, what they have tried with students, and sample lesson plans, and gather feedback from colleagues and ask questions.