Increasing Teacher Knowledge and Social-Emotional Learning in Central Minnesota

During the 2017–18 school year, Sourcewell partnered with Carnegie Learning to provide professional learning for 19 special education teachers to build both their mathematical content knowledge and confidence in the classroom.

Sourcewell is a Minnesota service cooperative that partners with government, education, and nonprofit organizations to boost student and community success.

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-LISA PINGREY, EDUCATION CONSULTANT, SOURCEWELL

THE CHANGE

Carnegie Learning Master Math Practitioner Christi Sampson provided a week-long training focused on early number concepts with the teachers prior to the beginning of the school year. Further, she supported teachers in the classroom throughout the year via site visits.

“The training was very well received,” says Sourcewell Education Consultant Lisa Pingrey. “The teachers really appreciated the challenge and the in-class support.”

In the 2019–20 school year, Carnegie Learning is continuing to deliver professional learning to Minnesota SPED teachers. One cohort of teachers participated in several professional learning days prior to the start of school that were focused on fraction sense and operations, while a new group of teachers started with early number concepts. A mixture of both special education and regular education teachers will get monthly coaching as well.

“Christi has been extremely professional,” Pingrey added. “She has developed relationships with the teachers. She has been there to assist us any time, no matter what we needed. The professional learning she delivered was engaging and meaningful. She worked so well with our team to challenge and support teachers.”

During a recent training on fractions, teachers submitted the following feedback on their evaluations:

- “Great conceptual knowledge of fractions.”
- “Rich discussions.”
- “My thinking is continually but comfortably stretched.”
- “So eye opening and engaging.”
- “Made me think outside the box.”
THE RESULTS

Carnegie Learning prepared an in-depth report for Sourcewell on the research findings from data collected during the 2017–18 professional learning. Carnegie Learning’s Research Team used measures developed by the Learning Mathematics for Teaching (LMT) Project, a rigorous, validated framework for evaluating teacher learning. Immediate, significant gains were realized after the first week’s training that persisted through an evaluation at the end of the 2017–18 academic year.

Teachers are powerful agents of change in their classrooms. Not only did Carnegie Learning survey teacher content knowledge, but also social-emotional (SEL) outcomes like teacher self-efficacy to determine how confident teachers felt about their ability to impact student learning. Through this holistic evaluation, Carnegie noted they felt better about their efficacy over time with the professional learning.

The report provides concrete evidence of the success of Carnegie Learning’s professional learning engagement with participating teachers from districts associated with Sourcewell in Minnesota. Overall, evidence points to significant, substantive, long-term increases in teacher pedagogical content knowledge, evolving classroom practices aligned with recommendations provided as a part of in-classroom support, and the maintenance of moderate to high levels of teacher self-efficacy.

Sourcewell has used the data provided by Carnegie Learning to evaluate the impact of this professional learning to ensure they’re on track in providing support to, and challenging, the teachers. Master Math Practitioners regularly meet with the team of coaches and consultants to review the data, discuss techniques, and create evolving game plans.