

## *University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR): Improving Teacher Quality in Middle School Mathematics*

The MSP grant proposal was submitted in June 2013. An official award letter of grant funding from ADE was received in September 2013. Recruitment of teacher-participants began during fall 2013, after notice of grant funding was received. Announcement flyers were sent to all LRSD middle schools and to several private schools. However, no applications were received from private school inservice teachers. One application was received from a charter school in LRSD. Sixteen workshops were conducted during the time period January to July 2014. This is year one of a three-year project.

**What:** During November, 2014, teacher participants attended the Arkansas Curriculum Conference (three hours). During January - April 2014, there were 4.5 day workshops; during May -June 2014, an online phase was conducted; in July, there were 10 day workshops.

**Workshop 1:** 36 teacher-participants on afternoon on Jan. 24th and 34 teacher-participants on Jan. 25th. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in ratio and proportional relationships (nine hours)

**Workshop 2:** 32 teacher-participants on Feb. 22nd. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in ratio and proportional relationships (six hours).

**Workshop 3:** 29 teacher-participants on March 15th. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in ratio and proportional relationships (six hours).

**Workshop 4:** 29 teacher-participants on April 26th. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in ratio and proportional relationships and Algebraic expressions (six hours).

**Workshop 5:** Online phase (10 hours) from May to June. See the attachment for details of the activities.

**Workshop 6 - 10:** conducted on July 14th - 18th with about 19 teacher-participants in average. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in fractions, decimals and percentages, rational numbers (six hours per day).

**Workshop 11 - 14:** conducted on July 21st - 25th with about 30 teacher-participants in average. Activities were focused on mathematics content area in probability (six hours per day).

RTOP (Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol) classroom observations were conducted during February to April 2014. Each teacher participant kept a portfolio containing all the activity work and materials. A unique aspect of the professional development is the online phase which was conducted during May to June 2014. We also set up Dropbox for sharing-out of all workshop handouts/materials.

**Why:** While the end goal of the MSP project is to improve student achievement in mathematics and the content knowledge of teachers, the objectives of the project have been written in such a manner that the specific impact of the project can be measured.

**Objective 1:** Increase student achievement in mathematics as measured by the State Benchmark scores using 2012 as the base.

**Objective 2:** Increase the content knowledge of grades 6-8 teacher-participants on identified indicators as measured by Diagnostic Teacher Assessment in Mathematics and Science (DTAMS).

Objective 3: Increase the content knowledge rating of grades 6-8 teacher-participants on identified indicators as measured by the Individual Mathematics Teachers Content/Confidence Survey (IMTCCS).

Objective 4: Improve instruction classroom practices of grades 6-8 teacher-participants as measured by the RTOP classroom teaching observation protocol.