

Proposal Abstract

The Author in M (i-AIM) project will address English Language Arts learning targets in writing for intermediate and secondary level students with disabilities in Catskill Central School District. The project will strengthen the expertise of existing district Technology Integrators (Master Teachers) during Year One of the project which will emphasize the Catskill Middle School. In Year Two, the Integrators will provide job-embedded professional development (JEPD) for special education intermediate and secondary level teachers, inclusive of the use of mobile assistive technologies, with an emphasis on writing. It is intended that the Technology Integrators will increase the pedagogical knowledge and expertise of special education teachers during the second year of the project and then expand to providing the same embedded coaching to all core subject teachers in Year Three. Student goals will include the development of confidence and competency in the use of technology to improve their ability to provide supportive claims and valid reasoning, write cohesively to clarify the relationships between claims and reasons, and communicate, collaborate, and meet the demands of intermediate and secondary coursework across the content areas.

Through a deliberate first year focus on special education, the i-AIM project seeks to remedy the digital divide that exists between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peer by making sure their teachers receive just-in-time JEPD to maximize the opportunities for students to meet their self-regulated learning goals through supportive and appropriate digital technologies. The district's Technology Integrators will receive intensive professional training through the first year of the Learning Technology Grant and continue to be provided with updated professional training in technology integration practices throughout and beyond the grant period. The role of Master Teachers as Technology Integrators will sustain and grow the JEPD model beyond the funding cycle, and establish a concrete foundation for sustainable technology integration within the district into the future.

The i-AIM project capitalizes upon the district's intention to monitor student performance through common formative assessments among grade level intermediate and secondary level teachers as well as common writing rubrics aligned with New York State Learning Standards in ELA. By focusing upon writing, the i-AIM goals are consistent with the Board of Regents Reform Agenda in the preparation of students for pathways after secondary school. Teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities to examine student work, develop consistency in their ratings of student work and collaborate within grade level content areas and across the intermediate and secondary curricula.

Teachers will have an opportunity to rehearse skills in technology integration and develop mini- and model lessons that they will share with one another through technology platforms available within the district. The Project Coordinator will work with the Catskill Public Library to identify appropriate workshops and training for identified audiences.