From Buffalo to Plattsburgh to Long Island, NYS Teacher Centers Have Promoted and Supported Lifelong Learning For All Educators Since 1984

In 1984, 44 Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers were established and funded by the New York State Legislature under Education Law 316. This law called for the provision of systematic, ongoing professional education services to New York State teachers. The enabling legislation introduced an innovative approach to staff development across the state, and created a unique relationship between Teacher Centers and schools.

New York States’ 126 Teacher Centers have become an integral part of the continuum of professional learning opportunities provided to educators. Through work that targets the needs of individual districts, programs, and stakeholders, Teacher Centers act as ongoing support to over 650 public school districts as well as non-public and charter schools.

In support of teaching and learning NYS Teacher Centers provide:
- Programming that assists in the implementation of NYSED Initiatives
- Professional learning that leads to the completion of CTLE requirements
- Programs to meet the specific needs of teachers at the classroom level
- Partnerships with regional and national Professional Learning Associations; BOCES; Higher Education Institutions; and a myriad of Private/Public Technology organizations

Following are a sampling of programs that highlight the important and essential work that Teacher Centers are doing across the state.

To learn more about Teacher Centers, please visit our website at www.nysteachercenters.org
Eastern Upstate: The Central New York / Oswego County Teaching Center offered a unique summer learning experience for teachers and children enrolled in SUNY Oswego’s Summer Enrichment Program. Students in the program are identified by Oswego County’s Department of Social Services through needs-based scholarships. This collaboration among schools, colleges, and social services provided professional learning for teachers and enrichment opportunities for students living in poverty. In the program, teachers were exposed to varied instructional technology applications. They then integrated technology into lessons and "practiced" the lessons with the students in live classroom settings. After the lessons teachers refined the lessons based on peer and student feedback. Through this plan-trial-refine-implement loop, teachers entered the year with a portfolio of STEAM related lessons.

Lower Hudson: Teachers in the Lower Hudson Regional Network are participating in The Studying Skillful Teaching Program, the cornerstone program of Research for Better Teaching. This year long program started in the summer and is helping to build teachers’ capacity, knowledge and skills as well as the courage and conviction to promote students’ motivation, learning, and increased achievement. It is based on the belief that teaching is a process of decision-making and that skillful teachers never stop learning through experimentation, data analysis, study, and collegial sharing about what works best for their students. Classroom teachers and instructional leaders in the region have come together to discuss best practices, learn about important factors influencing instruction, and reflect on their professional experiences, as well as how personal experiences with education helped shape their professional approach.

Greater Rochester: The Greater Rochester Teacher Center Network hosted a conference on the “Brain-Targeted Teaching (BTT) Model”, a pedagogical framework to guide educators in delivering a rigorous and engaging program of instruction. Dr. Mariale Hardiman spoke to 70 teachers about the BTT Model and how to incorporate the framework into their teaching practice. Participants learned about creating positive and effective emotional and physical learning environments; the development of “big picture” concepts and goals to guide students; mastery of content, skills and concepts; real-world application of learning, and evaluation for learning, as well as of learning. Participants indicated a definite change as a result.

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New York City: The New York City UFT Teacher Center (UFTTC) provides professional development and support for teacher leaders and the implementation of teacher career ladders. Teachers have embraced this leadership opportunity as teacher leaders to support student learning across classrooms within a school. The role of a teacher leader is to foster deeper collaboration within a school community as well as strengthen leadership skills to facilitate instructional change. UFTTC supports the work of some 900 teacher leaders in over 400 schools throughout the five boroughs. Ongoing professional learning opportunities are provided throughout the year in the following areas; leading teacher teams, engaging in peer coaching, strengthening instructional practice and using formative assessments to monitor student learning. Teacher leaders will be invited to present at the UFT Annual Teacher Leadership Conference.

Long Island: Teachers from across Long Island came together for three workshops focused on effective implementation of the New York State Science Learning Standards. The new Standards, introduced in 2017, are rich in content and practice, and require a greater depth of hands-on learning. The Long Island Network of Teacher Centers (LINC) collaborated with local educational specialists who had worked with NYSED to develop these State Standards. These experts presented work where participants built an understanding of the three dimensions of performance expectations and explored teaching and learning through anchoring phenomena. Resources for curriculum development were also shared.

Southern Tier: The Southern Tier Teacher Center Network, in partnership with Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s K-12 Education Program, offers online training to assist with NYS Science Standards through a variety of nature-based STEM opportunities for students. During and after the sessions, teachers and university professionals discuss strategies and create lesson plans for integrating authentic inquiry into daily practice. Connections are made to global research and scientific data-collection programs open for student participation. Instruction and resources for implementing both indoor and outdoor, small and large-scale nature activities are provided. Topics include; exploring and improving schoolyard habitats, nature gardens, engineering, designing student investigations.