Professional Development that *STICKS*

The literature reports results of numerous empirical studies exploring the factors most effective in improving student outcomes, yet provides few methods of verifying that delivery of professional development, as currently implemented, improves or sustains the teacher skills necessary for this improvement. This paucity of evidence provides considerable opportunity for development of professional development curriculum that may enhance teacher practice and promote student success.

The purpose of this IES Grant funded project (R324A090283) is the development of a high quality professional development curriculum, Professional Development that is *S*ystemic, focused on *T*eacher growth, *I*ncorporates *C*oaching, collaboration, cohorts, & *K*nowledge to create *S*tudent Success (*S* *T* *I* *C* *K* *S*), which is specifically designed with the exact features known to effectively refine, enrich, and enhance teacher practice, and to meet the ultimate goal of all professional development activities, improving student outcomes. The *STICKS* curriculum will offer professional development opportunities to teachers in inclusive K-8 classrooms. Integrated within the proposed project are characteristics deemed critical to high quality, reform oriented, professional development opportunities, such as (a) validated content relevant to educators, administrators, and districts (b) site-based program delivery (c) collegial opportunities that encourage the development of a community of teacher learners, (d) coaching, observation, and feedback in authentic educational settings (e) longevity to include a substantial number of contact hours provided over a significant time period, such as a school year, and (f) a focus on improved student outcomes.

Delivered through a system of topical learning units formulated from evidence-based practice, the *STICKS* curriculum units include (1) evidence-based instruction, (2) behavioral strategies, (3) student engagement, (4) opportunities to respond, (5) reinforcement and teacher attention, (6) classroom ecology, and (7) data-based decision making. The curriculum can be implemented with fidelity by school personnel, and will include a strong assessment component as well.

Carried out over three years, the *STICKS* project will meet the following objectives:

**Objective 1.** Develop an evidence based professional development curriculum, *STICKS*, comprised of (a) 7 evidence-based topical web-based learning modules developed through data-based identification of validated management strategies applicable to teachers and students in inclusive settings, (b) collaborative sessions and supplemental activities, (c) a web-based evaluation system, (d) a coach’s manual and training program and (e) an educator identified needs assessment.

**Objective 2.** Conduct teacher focus group testing of *STICKS* curriculum components and complete refinements.

**Objective 3.** Conduct implementation trials to provide pilot data to test the feasibility of the *STICKS* professional development and complete final revisions.

Maura Wechsler Linas, Ph.D.  Howard P. Wills, Ph.D.  Jay Buzhardt, Ph.D.  
mwlinas@ku.edu  hpwills@ku.edu  jaybuz@ku.edu