

EDITORIAL

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Picture one hundred sixty elementary teachers, under the leadership of Master Teachers, exploring, making mathematical conjectures, and solving problems. This picture gives you a view of what some Missouri elementary teachers will be doing this summer as part of their involvement in the Missouri Elementary Mathematics Leadership Academy. This three-year project, supported by \$2.7 million in Department of Education funds distributed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, is currently in its third year of development.

The project Co-Directors, Dr. Terry Goodman of the University of Central Missouri and Dr. Larry Campbell of Missouri State University, have worked with 34 Master Teachers to develop lessons that focus on the elementary content strand of numbers and operations. These lessons will be the basis for the curriculum for this summer's Academy. The 160 teachers will gather at three sites around the state of Missouri for two-week content Academies in June. The primary goal of this summer's Academy is to help these teachers develop more depth and breadth in their mathematics understanding. Further, these teachers will explore a variety of instructional strategies, materials, and assessments that they can use in their own classrooms. The teachers will be lead in their study by a group of K-8 grade Master Teachers specifically chosen for this task.

During July, all the teachers will meet for a third week where they will participate in a workshop lead by Drs. Doug and Barbara Clarke, Australian mathematics educators who have helped to develop the Growth Points inventory, a tool that teachers can use to determine their students' depth of mathematical understanding.

Teams of these teachers will continue with ongoing, school based professional development activities throughout the next academic year. Master Teachers and the project's Regional Teacher enhancement Coordinators will work with the teachers to help them implement what they have learned from the summer Academy into their classrooms.

The Elementary Academy is founded on the following premises:

1. Classroom teachers are the persons most responsible for creating an environment that is supportive of student learning and development.
2. Elementary teachers' mathematics content knowledge has a significant effect on their ability to teach mathematics.
3. Teachers benefit more from professional development that is ongoing, school-based and that includes mentoring/coaching from Master Teachers.

Teachers who have participated in the first two years of the Academy have demonstrated significant growth in their mathematics content understanding, in their ability to use a variety of instructional strategies and resources, and in their ability to think deeply about their students' mathematical understanding.