

School District of the City of Pontiac
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
Curriculum Resource Center

WHRC-Upper Level
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Edwina Borovich, Consultant
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To Whom it May Concern,

I recommend the Institute for Multi-Sensory Education to anyone who is considering Orton-Gillingham training. In my role as curriculum resource consultant for the Pontiac School District I work with teachers and assist them with techniques and materials. Our reading committee had been meeting for three years and we were proud of our accomplishments in developing and using whole language and literature based approaches with our students, yet we knew something was missing. We knew that as much as we motivated our students, they still were not decoding words – if they could not rely on memory they still could not read. We researched further and the teachers studied some of the sound symbol approaches currently in use. They decided that the Orton-Gillingham approach would meet their needs. I had received literature from Bronwyn Hain but frankly was quite hesitant to have an “outsider” come and train “my” teachers. She assured me over and over that Jeanne Liuzzo understood teaching from a classroom teacher’s point of view and that we would be very pleased.

As it turned out our group of teachers was more than pleased. We trained 13 staff. The K-12 Director and I took the first 18 hours so we would be familiar with the program and the training. The group completed 33 hours and have implemented the program. The training was thorough, well sequenced, and met the teachers’ needs. Jeanne delivers the information with a highly energized, knowledgeable and individualized approach. She presents the information and has the teachers practice with one another so the information is internalized. She employs effective practices using a multi-sensory approach and hands on learning. These teachers were so enthusiastic that they wanted the other special education teachers in their buildings to have the training. So we trained 10 more teachers early in September of this year and they are as enthusiastic as the first group. The teachers have repeatedly said to me that this was the missing piece in their reading program. They did not know how to teach these skills in a systematic, success oriented approach and this Orton-Gillingham training provided them with these skills. I have received thank you notes stating that this was more valuable than any graduate class and hear student success stories whenever I see these teachers.

An important piece of this training is the classroom visitations Jeanne has made to assist the teachers in implementation. Jeanne’s approach with the teachers is like the approaches she recommends for the students. She is positive and success oriented with

the teachers and was very helpful to them on the visitations. She was able to answer questions and help them adjust their techniques when needed. She is also attending two follow-up sessions which the teachers requested to further answer questions, clarify and to share ideas of implementation.

With the two groups trained, we felt it was important to have an overview for the principals and general education teachers in the buildings where we are using this method. Some of our teachers co-teach and it was important that their team partners understand this technique. Jeanne and Bronwyn provided an informative overview. From the overview, the excitement generated from the teachers, and the success of students many general education staff have become interested in the program. I am in the process of working with our district staff development coordinator to establish a district project for general education staff at three or four of our buildings. The interest for this training has been generated by general education teachers and curriculum leaders as they see this method a needed too for them to use in their classrooms.

Although this program appears costly and I initially questioned using the greater portion of our Special Education designated staff development funds for one project, I have discovered that it has had more impact on the education of our students than any other staff development activity or series of activities and is well worth the funds expended. The Institute for Multi-Sensory Education has developed a highly effective method of intensively educating teachers. Our teachers have all effectively learned this approach and are using it in their classrooms. This success oriented approach for the teachers with the classroom follow-up assures that the teachers will learn and implement this technique.

We are more than pleased. We are thrilled to have found a program that we can easily infuse into our daily teaching and has so greatly impacted our students.

I highly recommend the Institute for Multi-Sensory Education's teacher training program to any school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edwina C. Borovich". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Edwina C. Borovich
Curriculum Resource Consultant