

## Lake County Effective Teaching Center

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The LCEA and the Lake County School Board and Administration have joined forces in a collaborative effort to provide improved educational services to teachers through the Educational Research and Dissemination Project (ER&D). Implementation of this program demonstrates that both LCEA and the School Board are vitally interested in offering innovative approaches to teacher effectiveness.

The ER&D project, begun in 1981, is unique in that it represents the first time a teacher's union has served as a conduit between educational research and practicing teachers. The model allows teachers to work with the research, transforming it into a useful tool for everyday classroom teaching and learning. This project is a long-term professional plan.

In Lake County, an innovative program has been initiated which will provide for teachers to attend ER&D training in a series of six all-day workshops, with substitutes provided jointly by the Board and funding from private foundations arranged by AFT. A different piece of research dealing with teacher effectiveness or classroom management will be studied at each session and taken back to the classroom by each teacher to implement as s(h)e chooses.

The program involves the selection of teachers to be trained as TRL's (Teacher Research Linkers) who will serve as trainers and workshop leaders for their peers in their own schools. These TRL's will receive in-service points toward re-certification upon completion of the course.

The ER&D Project is designed to promote a non-threatening atmosphere, free of mandates. The emphasis is on the personal, professional choice of the teacher in regard to the application of the research.

**lcea** lake county  
education association

### What It Can Provide

1. Allows teachers to apply educational research findings directly to the local school setting without extended delay and within a framework which offers relevant strategies for daily classroom application;
2. Offers a voluntary process which permits the individual teacher to seek or accept change in a natural manner and internalize new information;
3. Allows teachers to be directly involved in a leadership capacity in the application of research in the classroom and the analysis of its effectiveness;
4. Allows teachers to use valid channels of communication for the examining of effective teaching techniques in the company of other teachers (collegial atmosphere; non-judgmental application and analysis; diminished isolationism);
5. Awakens teachers to recognition of teaching as an art and a science through recognition and assimilation of a body of skills, some of which are still evolving;
6. Offers opportunities for application to all disciplines and all grade levels;
7. Holds promise for extension into such areas as: future research in effective teaching field; improved evaluation/observation procedures and instruments; development of peer evaluation and intervention processes; improved working relationships with colleges of education, business and industry, district school systems; supplementary training for potential administrators and supervisors in local school systems; development of career ladder structures for classroom teachers (mentors, learning specialists).

### What It Does Not Provide

1. A band-aid approach to educational ills;
2. A deficit orientation toward teacher weaknesses;
3. A canned program;
4. A reliance on untested, experimental concepts;
5. A program to set rigid prescriptions for how teachers should teach;
6. Perpetuation of the traditional isolation of the individual teacher;
7. Utilization of research intended inappropriately to alter a teacher's style;
9. An administratively mandated program;
10. A judgmental, competitive environment.

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This project is derived from the American Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination Program (ER&D) whose purposes are (a) to further the professional growth of its members, (b) to make teachers users of research, and (c) to improve student achievement.

AFT program history: 1981, two-year NIE grant; three pilot sites: Washington, D.C., New York City, and San Francisco

Institutions involved: Columbia University, Stanford University,  
and Far West Laboratories for Educational Research

Practitioners at Stanford, U. of Illinois, Maryland, and Columbia University

## The Effective Teaching Center

### Concept and Implementation Possibilities

#### Stage I

Teacher Research Coordinator (TRC) serves as instructor to train classroom teachers as Teacher Research Linkers (TRL's)

Application of research to classroom setting by TRL's

Feedback to TRC on application of research findings

Expansion of TRL's insight as to research findings effectiveness

Expansion of TRL's insight as to possibilities for further research

Sharing of ideas and findings by TRL's with interested faculty members and with other TRL's

Program presentations by TRC to publicize content and progress of training project and ETC model

#### Stage II

##### TRC:

Continued training to produce additional TRL's

Dissemination of project information to other groups;  
possible training of TRC's to serve in other areas

Feedback to ER&D of AFT on research application effectiveness and on new research possibilities

##### TRL:

Assist in training new TRL's

Development of TRL teams on faculties

Examination of teacher observation/evaluation instruments to determine accuracy and practicality of use

Development of intervention team strategies to assist teachers experiencing teaching performance difficulties

Involvement with application of new research as it becomes available (possible collaboration with universities or with business and industry for funding sources)

Involvement with inter-school sharing sessions with other TRL's for gaining and dispensing valuable ideas and more effective approaches

### Stage III

- Development of ETC network throughout state; assist with beginning efforts in other districts
- Identification of resource bank of teachers within Lake County and in other counties to share expertise
- Dissemination of new research findings through new inservice sessions; many of these could be presented at the faculty level if sufficient TRL's are present on campus to serve as catalysts
- Development and use of teacher intervention teams to assist teachers who need help in teaching more effectively
- Development of peer evaluation teams
- Development and field testing of improved observation/evaluation instruments and procedures for assessing teacher performance
- Development of teacher-designed mini-workshops which could be made available to other interested teachers (possibilities endless; length of time of each workshop determined by amount of content or training to be provided); workshops could be provided at local school level, in county areas, or countywide, depending upon interest; all workshops taught by teachers themselves (see attached list for just a few possibilities)
- Collaboratively developed training with local teachers and university personnel of new certification programs to prepare highly motivated teachers to assume responsibilities as learning consultants/specialists or as teacher mentors

### Stage IV

- Development of research center capabilities to continue updating all teachers in the most up-to-date methods of effective teaching
- Development of district career ladder programs offering opportunities to highly motivated career teachers who demonstrate interest, expertise and leadership; establishment of state-approved, university-designed programs of certification and possible degree status to prepare teachers as learning consultants/specialists and mentors
- Establishment of coalitions with government, business, and industry to provide funding for new research and for dissemination of validated research on a timely basis
- Establishment of a network of Effective Teaching Centers throughout the state of Florida and the United States which can play an active role in the preservice and inservice of teachers; identify outstanding teacher practitioners within this network who can serve as resource persons and as creative "movers and shapers" of educational improvement in this country