

Mathematics Content Coaching Supports Teacher Growth



Angela Keene (pictured left) is the Mathematics Coach for Berea Community Schools. Keene has been participating in the KCM's middle grades Content Coaching training since spring of 2013. According to Ms. Keene, "The math coaching training I have received through KCM has been unquestionably the most informative training I have ever been a part of." As a coach, Keene works with mathematics teachers in all grades within the Berea Community School District to help improve teacher practice.

In the fall of 2012, KCM partnered with the Kentucky Department of Education to provide research-based, Content Coaching training. This professional learning experience is designed to enhance educators' ability to initiate profound, sustainable, school-wide improvements in teaching and learning. Keene indicated this training has "given me the tools necessary to assist teachers in developing the instructional strategies needed to successfully implement the Common Core State Standards."

Keene recognizes the challenges mathematics teachers face and the need for rich professional development experiences. Keene shares, "One thing I have learned through this experience is that the majority of teachers want professional development; they want to improve their craft, to be more effective, implement new skills, and see students learn more." Keene understands the importance of strong professional relationships that guide school improvement. "For a coach to be most effective he or she must first establish mutual understanding that coaching is supportive, not evaluative, this allows for honest discourse and true reflection on instruction," Keene said.

Other teachers who have participated in this KCM training have also commented on their experiences. One teacher said, "I now have more tools to try and change the culture of mathematics teaching in my district. I feel more confident in what my roles are as a math coach." Another stated, "The impact a coach or teacher leader can have on classroom instruction is powerful. The professional development opens your eyes as to how math can look and sound in all classrooms."

"Participating in this professional learning experience has expanded not only my content knowledge but also my knowledge of how students learn math. This has prepared me to participate in meaningful discussions with our teachers about the importance of building number sense and the significance of allowing students to explore multiple ways of solving problems."

-Angela Keene, Mathematics Coach
Berea Community Schools

The goal of the KCM Content Coaching course is to build support for mathematics teachers to become experts in both their content and the best pedagogical practices by which to bring that content to their students. Content coaching focuses on the daily tasks of planning, teaching, and reflecting on lessons by suggesting a framework and tools for addressing standards, curriculum, principles of learning, lesson design and formative assessment. Schools that invest in mathematics coaches are working to develop school-wide learning cultures in which teachers open their classrooms and reflect publicly on their craft in order to create a shared vision of teaching and learning.

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