



# PDK Membership Newsletter

Phi Delta Kappa, the Education Association, Nov. 17, 2016. Growing and connecting leaders in education.

## Inspirational Educators

Check out our first member story! President of North Florida PDK Chapter 1470, Doug Matthews shares his innovations within education:

### **Addressing the unequal distribution of highly-effective teachers**

The educational community and the public at-large are constantly asking: How do we address the perennial and worsening issues surrounding the recruitment, development and retention of teachers, especially as they relate to teacher quality and the student achievement gap. There is growing concern that there is an unequal distribution of highly-effective teachers that leads to a multitude of student issues. In fact, in some districts almost 50% are now coming from second careers with alternative certification, never having attended a school of education and never will, and those teachers are typically assigned to the hard-to-staff rural and urban schools meaning the least experienced teachers add to the student achievement gap. Further, turnover is now approaching 3-5 years and 50% of teachers are gone.

In answer to these concerns, I have for over 15 years been moved to develop a programmatic resource for K12 teachers with new assignments consisting of an omnibus series of K12 subject-specific instructional support materials, including subject-specific mentoring teacher access. The program also addresses, among others, the issues of recruiting, developing and retaining of teachers. The reason for developing this resource is that, as decades of research have shown, there is a one-to-one relationship between better prepared teachers and improved student achievement, and by extension, graduation rates, college and career readiness, increased personal career and income opportunities and ultimately, economic development for the community at large.

The development of the resources was made possible with the help of over 120 experienced, expert K12 teachers who have written what they do in class on a daily-basis to share with teachers new to a subject. This, many believe, is the most practical, economical way of addressing the unequal distribution of highly-effective teachers by simply training teachers with new assignments in-place – where ever they are – particularly in hard-to-staff rural and urban schools.

The Teaching and Learning Foundation supports this effort and has secured \$1.2MM in grant funding for tuition through participating universities to offer 100 of the *Expert Systems for Teachers®* online asynchronous courses. Teachers enrolled take a pre-test and then an end-of-course post-test to confirm improved content mastery.

The empirical evidence shows (see [Teaching and Learning Foundation](#)) that only 27% pass the pre-test, underlining the need for assistance. The good news is that virtually all pass the post-test after working with the instructional and mentoring support during the school year in which they are teaching a subject for the first time. After 775 enrollments over the last two years, the statistics show that the average pre-test score is 56% and the average post-test score is 90%.

The goals are to reduce turnover, enhance recruitment and retention efforts as well as improved teacher and student achievement. This program helps superintendents, principals, department chairs, staff development directors, human resource directors, teachers, parents and students. In fact, the program helps every stakeholder as all benefits flow from better prepared teachers in the classroom.

Further, these goals are in line with the recent US Department of Education regulations that address 1) teacher equity and 2) grading of teacher prep programs based on retention of graduates in the classroom and improved student achievement by those graduates.

The *Expert Systems for Teachers*® Series is designed to save teachers hundreds of hours of prep time by giving them what they do not receive in short-term workshops: a sustained, “just-in-time,” on-the-job training program with complete instructional and mentoring support throughout the school year. Each enrolled teacher receives a complete printed teacher manual with CD that includes a pacing guide, detailed daily lesson plans, editable PowerPoint Class Notes, complete student activity book or lab manual and editable assessments along with subject-specific mentoring teacher access.

The materials already serve schools in all 50 U.S. states and 87 countries and online courses currently through four universities: The University of Florida, University of North Florida, Texas A&M Commerce and University of Missouri St. Louis. For more information, check the [Teaching and Learning Foundation](#) web site.

I hope this sets a good example of what PDK members can do to help the educational community, globally.

**About the author:** Doug Matthews is President of the North Florida Phi Delta Kappa Chapter 1470. He has been serving in this position for three years. He is also President of [Teaching Point](#) whose declaration of purpose is to 1) develop a knowledge base for teaching in all subjects and grade levels in all major languages for the benefit of both teachers and students globally and 2) by doing so, solve the problem of the unequal distribution of effective teachers through a method unique and innovative enough to be patented: [U.S. Patent 8116674](#) (see description beginning page 18 of PDF). Matthews is also author of the White Paper: *A Path to Highly-Effective Teachers*. Contact: [doug@teaching-point.net](mailto:doug@teaching-point.net)

[Web link to article at PDK: http://pdkintl.org/addressing-the-unequal-distribution-of-highly-effective-teachers/?utm\\_source=PDK%20International&utm\\_campaign=77bc315f0a-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2016\\_11\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_867590cd6a-77bc315f0a-30167533](http://pdkintl.org/addressing-the-unequal-distribution-of-highly-effective-teachers/?utm_source=PDK%20International&utm_campaign=77bc315f0a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2016_11_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_867590cd6a-77bc315f0a-30167533)