2018-2020 - WIRED FOR LEARNING: SUPPORTING THINKING SKILLS IN THE K-2 CLASSROOM, Durham County Public Schools

Granting Agency: Duke University, Social Science Research Institute, Bass Connections
Target Group: K-2 in 2 Title I Schools – 13 teachers and 250 students
Location: Durham, North Carolina
Years: 2018-2020
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Project Description

Wired for Learning is a project designed to support K-2 children who are at risk of falling behind or struggling academically in school. The general premise of the program is to target the development of those thinking skills and dispositions that are known to enhance student success in school while also enhancing educators' understanding of brain science and the relationship to teaching and learning. The project involves professional development for K-2 teachers, field testing of a K-2 thinking skills curriculum, parent programming to support K-2 learning, and the collection of observational and achievement data to evaluate program impact on both K-2 students and their teachers. Bass students will be involved in activities that will foster the development of a variety of skills and enhance their knowledge of public education policy and curriculum and instruction. The project will also provide students with: 1) exposure to leaders in public education; 2) experience in the implementation of curriculum and instruction in classrooms; 3) authentic collaborate with various stakeholders on solutions and; 4) the opportunity to conduct field-based research and publish results

Project Goals

Goal 1: Develop and field-test a K-2 curriculum that intentionally integrates those learning dispositions and thinking skills that have proven to be critical to the cognitive development and academic success of young students.
Goal 2: Provide professional development and support for teachers on thinking skills, learning dispositions, and brain science as they relate to K-2 learning and development.
Goal 3: Design and deliver parent workshops on at-home methods for helping their children be successful in school.
Goal 4: Conduct research on program effectiveness in supporting future academic success of participating children and in enhancing teaching practices over time.
Goal 5: Disseminate results on impact and advocate for comprehensive K-2 nurturing programs that address thinking skills, dispositions for learning, and brain science.
Goal 6: Provide Bass students the opportunity to authentically collaborate with various stakeholders around a timely education policy issue and conduct field-based research.

Bass students will also have the opportunity to analyze and evaluate components of an existing K-2 nurturing program (Bright Idea), including the rich longitudinal data collected in previous implementations with over 10,000 students, to determine those areas that have been successful in achieving project goals and which may need revision to increase impact.