UTeach Professional Development

What do educators learn from our online Blended Learning Series?

> Educators enrolled in the UTeach **Blended Learning** professional development series take four courses. We selected a few of their assignments to give you a sense of what they are learning. All educators gave us permission to share their work products.

BL 104 Capstone Transforming Classrooms for the Digital Age

Assignment: Blended Learning Reflection Paper

The final activity in the UTeach Blended Learning Series requires participants to answer a driving question: *How do I best combine the technology-enhanced tools, differentiation strategies, and management tools to transform my classroom into a blended learning environment?*

Throughout the reflection paper, participants elaborate on the following topics:

1. Share what you are specifically trying to accomplish in your blended learning classroom.
2. Discuss changes you have made or plan to make to foster a blended learning environment.
3. Communicate how these changes will enhance student learning and describe what evidence you will use to determine improvement.

The following reflection papers were written by educators taking the Blended Learning course series:

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Transforming My Classroom into a Blended Learning Environment: Tara Bishop, High School Science Teacher, Lamar High School, Arlington ISD

This reflection paper is from Tara Bishop who shares her initial reticence in taking the UTeach Blended Learning course series, and the transformative effect that this experience has had on her teaching strategies and ability to engage and challenge students. Tara shares specific resources and strategies that she has implemented to foster a student-centered environment, rich in collaborative interactions and purposeful use of technology. She offers the perspective of a teacher, faced with high stakes testing requirements, who has harnessed blended frameworks and technologies to target learning and prepare students for AP testing.

    The blended learning series has been more beneficial to my teaching than I could ever imagine. I began this course with the idea that I could gain knowledge to increase the rigor in my

classroom while continuing my lifelong journey of learning how to become the best teacher I could be. I have truly been given so much more than I expected. Not only has the blended learning series increased my knowledge of technology use and classroom differentiation, it has completely changed my outlook on how learning in my classroom should look. I can't say enough about how the series has improved my teaching strategies.

One of the biggest changes that has happened in my classroom deals with student collaboration. Instead of students listening to me talk and pour my knowledge into them, I am watching students gain knowledge on their own and share it with others in the classroom. Students most definitely know how to talk to one another. However, this is simply socializing. When students are given a problem, article, or lab to interact with, then asked to discuss, comment, and collaborate, this brings on a whole new meaning to student interaction. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching my students teach one another; it's amazing! Not to mention, the side discussions that transpire when students are asked to solve a problem or discuss a scientific article. This shows me that they are delving deeper into the material than I ever could with a PowerPoint lecture. My students have used Padlet, Canvas, and the "Claim, Evidence, Reasoning" (CER) model to collaborate and lead peer discussions in the classroom. I look forward to trying more technology enhanced discussion models in the future.

Before the blended learning series, I thought that incorporating technology in the classroom meant using a laptop to complete internet research or an online webquest while I monitored students. Now that I have completed the course, I've realized that is so far from the truth. Incorporating technology means digital assessments, video reflections, student created digital media, station rotations that include technology, students digitally collaborating, and so much more. I have received a wealth of resources that are available to me that will help with the conversion of my teacher-led classroom to a more student-led blended classroom. This abundance of resources has helped tremendously with lesson planning and formative assessment in my classroom. I have used a multitude of them including Padlet, Quizlet Live, Kahoot, PearDeck, Random Name Generator, and GradeCam, to name a few. The first two courses of this series were truly eye-opening and helped me to realize that my classroom was actually quite the opposite of what could be called a "technology rich" environment.

I teach three high stakes tested science courses at my school to grades 9-12. I have dedicated planning time for one of the courses and the other two I must carve out time during the day to plan. Because of this, I was skeptical about taking on a new teaching style on top of my other school responsibilities. However, I am so grateful that I jumped in to the blended learning series with an open mind, ready to embrace new ideas. In order to implement these new ideas, I have decided to

concentrate on one of my courses, AP Biology. In this course I plan to implement differentiation strategies such as menu boards, station rotations, and mastery paths. I have used station rotations so far with much success, and I am currently working on choice menus for our AP test review. My management strategies have somewhat changed as well. I have set specific rules for technology use and change my seating chart frequently to promote student collaboration in varying groups. During our VFND* period we go over how to create a positive digital footprint and what students can do to promote good digital citizenship. I have been quite pleased with the results of creating a student-centered blending learning environment. While the pace may be slow and steady, I believe that we are overcoming the typical way of learning and my students are developing ownership for their own learning; which will greatly benefit them in college.

I came into the blended learning series a bit skeptical, but kept an open mind and I am quite pleased with the amount of knowledge I've gained. I feel as if I have a solid footing to begin really developing a blended learning environment. My research, assignments, and colleague discussions have helped me to build a foundation on which will soon support a solid blended learning classroom environment. Students will take ownership of their learning, collaborate in a meaningful way with one another, and feel prepared to use critical thinking skills developed by classroom discovery to further their education.

*VFND stands for Viking Fight Never Dies!

Reflections on Blended Learning: Heather Blythe, Biology Teacher, Amarillo High School, Amarillo ISD, Texas

In her refreshingly candid reflection, Heather Blythe shares her blended learning transition and how this initiative has offered a surprising solution to wavering student engagement and increasing classroom management concerns that she had been noticing in her high school biology classroom. Like most teachers, Heather couldn't see how adopting a whole new methodology would be feasible in her already over-scheduled personal and professional life. She details how her first forays into blended learning using the station rotation model and purposeful technology were surprisingly well received by students. Heather and her students have been able to form meaningful relationships in small groups and the collaborative atmosphere of her blended classroom has resulted in higher levels of engagement and focus. Heather is excited about the ability to personalize learning by offering choice using technology and various blended frameworks, and her students are excited too. Not only has student engagement increased, student confidence in lesson materials have as well. Heather is dedicated to continuing this transformation for the coming school year and looks forward to exploring more strategies to guide student-centered and blended learning in a well-managed setting.

Blended Learning was a buzzword, an enigma when I said yes to this course. Everyone was talking about, no one really knew what it was, most every teacher I knew had one of two thoughts: that scares me to death or I am not going to do that much work to change what already works. I was a mix of the two in January. With an already packed schedule, a single mom, masters

student, coach and teacher, how could I add one more thing to do? And how in the world do I stay in control of a classroom that seems more concerned about how many likes on their instagram or streaks in snap than Biology if I am going to use even more technology than I am already? I said yes well, because I am curious, a bit of a risk taker and I hate the status quo...but even more, this year I saw a change in my students. Not a particularly good one either. The good ole teacher centered, let me lecture to you and you do some worksheets and now let's take a test to see how you do was not working too well. The kids were, for lack of a better word, a new kind of wild. One that was making me frustrated and taking some of the joy out of teaching. Now, 4 months later, I have been dipping my toe in the waters of blended learning and loving every wet drop! Already dreaming of what next year can look like as I begin to create something new, something the kids automatically turn too, enjoy, talk about. Who knew it could work and the kids could engage at a new level? In the beginning I thought differentiation was figuring out all the different learning styles in my huge freshman classes of 35 and then creating a lesson that catered to each and told them exactly what to do and how to do it. It was overwhelming. But I learned that differentiation was more about choices and autonomy. It was about the students doing the work to figure out what makes them excited about the content. Choices are a powerful motivator. No one likes to be told what to do and how to learn. I sure don't. The first day I got the courage to try this station rotation idea that I learned about, much to my surprise, the student's responded with enthusiasm and grace. Grace for the process and grace for me as the technology did not work quite right. We laughed together and moved on.

The kids talked about the subject, yes there were a few conversations about other things, but it was easy to bring them back to the task at hand. They enjoyed the small group instruction and I was able to monitor the very thing that scares me in large group learning...Did they get it? In small groups I am able to look them in the eye and see they understand. And even better, I get to know the kids at a level I did not before. After this experience, I began to dream, what could my classroom look like with my fixed lab tables if I were to employ this kind of learning? But you know what? Fixed lab tables mean nothing! It is about the creative power of my students and the CHOICE I gave them to learn at their own pace and choose what makes them excited.

Fact is each kid is so different. Blended learning gives them the ability to CREATE and BE who they are as I create lifelong learners who collaborate in powerful ways in my classroom. Crazy thing, it isn't students sitting in rows of lab stools. It is groups of students sitting on the back couch or in the hall or around the teacher lab table talking about the lab or the video or the lesson on viruses or cancer. It has been sharing of stories because my room became a safe place in the small group, where it was intimidating in the large group. The kids began asking each other instead of me...novel concept. The planning takes a bit more time, but in class...there is joy in learning again

and joy in facilitating that learning. There is not military silence so that there appears to be a modicum of control.

When my administrator came in the first time, he was a bit surprised, but upon further observation realized the kids were actually working and laughing and leaving my classroom not with loads of homework but with loads of confidence in the material just a few days later they didn't understand. It is testing season for us, as it is for most schools around the state. So I decided why not try a menu style review that gave the students access to me in small group but a menu of things to be working on both hands on and with their technology. It is working!! I want to scream from the rooftops...hey this works! Maybe we should all be moving this way! Kids are changing and education has to change or we will no longer be relevant to this generation of learners.

Moving forward into the 2019-2020 school year...I am COMMITTED to making this change. I am ready to swim in the deep end and take some other people with me! As I begin to look forward to the new year, I feel creative to help my students create their learning experience through discussion, technology, teaching, hands-on learning that not only gives the content but gives it in a meaningful, relevant way. Several things I know I must do this coming year:

- Have very firm beginning and end of class routines.
- Pre-test/Pre-teach to see where my students are in order to differentiate in a relevant way
- Make sure each of my lessons reaches all modalities of learning.
- Options and choices for each learning objective
- Use the menu option (like in the final modules for us) for each objective.

Will it be easy? Probably not. But NOTHING in this world that is worth doing is easy. Will it be beneficial? Many times, YES. And not just for me, but most importantly for my amazing students! I am so excited. Thank you for the opportunity and the teaching so that I got my own excitement back!

Blended Learning Reflection Paper: Stacy Chandler, High School Science Teacher, Vidor High School, Vidor ISD, Texas

In this reflection paper, Stacy Chandler shares very openly and with detailed examples how she is in the process of transitioning from a teacher-led classroom to a student-centered classroom with the support of her participation in the UTeach Blended Learning course series. She shares her original limited understanding of what a blended learning classroom looked like, and how that changed as a result of the UTeach Blended Learning course series. She now has a vision to help her students take ownership of their learning. Stacy shares specific software she is using and hopes to use in the future, discusses seating arrangements, and reflects upon how to change her lessons to empower her students.

The Blended Learning Series has been a wonderful learning experience. I went into the program thinking Blended Learning was teaching students how to learn mainly from computer-based programs and about what those programs were. My naïve vision was of students doing most of their work at home, on the computer, and coming to the classroom for tutoring or labs. Much to my relief, I now see a better way of teaching and learning, and the role I get to play in that process. I have received a treasure trove of information of how to assess the different learning levels and learning modalities of my very different learners and how to move forward in helping them to grasp the information and build on it.

I am from the "old-school" of a teacher standing in front of the class giving instruction, then having the students repeat that instruction on paper. Our instruction was mostly memorization (EVERY DAY), with a test over that memorization at the end of every week. There was no differentiation and those who struggled were often left behind. I'm sad to say that I brought some of those techniques with me into my modern classroom. Fortunately for modifications, not so many students were left behind.

Through the Blended Learning series of instruction, I've been able to build upon each new concept. It has enabled me to see the vision of a blended learning classroom come into focus. I will admit that at times I still feel overwhelmed with the "putting-it-all-together", but having been able to put into practice in my classroom what I've been doing online has given me greater confidence.

Growing up in a 100% teacher-led environment has made me a little apprehensive about "releasing the reins", so to speak, to my students. However, I see the same apprehension in my students. They are very much dependent on being instructed one step at a time, and it's been a growing experience (sometimes painful) for them and for me as we move forward together in this new way of teaching and learning.

One of my favorite programs to utilize is the Google Classroom. It's perfect for students who have been absent and I can set the due date to give them the time needed to complete their missed assignments. We have not perfected the collaboration that I would like to have with them, but some of my students do not always have access to the internet at home. Therefore, we're unable to keep an on-going communication and feedback going. However, for those who do have access, it's beneficial for them to know, prior to coming into the classroom, what topic is planned and they have the ability to do prior reading. I'm not yet sure how to level the field for all students for prior preparation.

I already have assigned seating, but I plan to change those assignments to reflect students seated next to each other with the same ability levels. I have very large class sizes with desks. I feel tables would better serve my purpose with this, so taking my idea to exchange desks for tables to

my principal will be a goal for the next school year. I don't feel changing from desks to tables will serve my students best at this time of the school year.

I also plan to initiate a blended learning schedule for my classes. One that includes a technology day and a stations day every week. However, Chemistry is supposed to be 40% lab so it will be difficult to initiate these goals. I think I need to begin small, with one week per unit scheduled (perhaps the beginning of a unit) and enlarge from there. My Earth and Space Science class will be much easier to institute this goal, so I think that subject area will be my first "target area" to transform, then move those goals over to Chemistry, adjusting as needed.

I read about a virtual lab for chemistry that is available online, so I plan to research this tool and hopefully be able to utilize it successfully in my class. An app like this, if I'm able to gear it to my high school classes, would be a huge benefit and enable me to better institute a blended learning schedule with the 40% lab requirement.

My largest undertaking, and most time consuming, will be the differentiation in the classroom. Having options of multiple assignments at varying learning levels for students to choose from will be hugely time-consuming due to the large amount of prep I already have with teaching two subjects, the large class sizes, and the wide range of learning levels in those classes. I think I will begin with two options per group (arranged by learning level), and building from there. I also plan to speak with my principal and counselors about being assigned to teach only one subject (if possible). I have three classes of one subject and four classes of another. It takes several classes to see what does and does not work, so by the time I've figured out the strengths and weaknesses, it's time to change subjects. There's no time for perfecting.

I'll continue to use, and perfect, the Google Classroom and Quizziz. These have been great tools for monitoring student progress and for practice in making assignments and the students getting in the habit of checking their accounts for new assignments. They've also proved very valuable to my students who have missed class and needed to make up work. I have used CK12, but not with very much success, so I need to learn more about how to use this program for the better benefit to my students.

I don't know what the future holds for my student's success, but I can move forward with optimism for my effectiveness as a teacher. I have learned so much from the Blended Learning course; both about how my students can be successful and the role I can play in that success. I feel confident in my ability to empower my students with the skills to take ownership of their learning, and to become an active participant in the planning process.

I'd like to take a moment to say "thank you" for your help and encouragement during this process. Coming from the "old way", I've definitely had my own learning curve to master, and I appreciate this opportunity that I've been given to become a greater asset to my students.

Blended Learning Reflection Paper: Britt Foster, Science Teacher, Brazos High School Credit Recovery, Waco ISD, Texas

This reflection paper is from Britt Foster, who came into the course with a strong background in leading blended, differentiated and student-centered classrooms. With this strong foundation, Britt used the UTeach Blended Learning course series to identify specific technology tools to encourage collaboration and creativity in her classroom, and explore options to streamline student-centered learning and support students in a well-managed setting. Britt shares heightened perspective on strategies to manage station rotation lessons using technology to convey instructions and embed accountability. She has implemented a digital citizenship program in her classroom as a result of the course series and is fostering individual student ownership, while promoting collaboration to build and extend learning.

My classroom has always been a blended learning, differentiated and student-centered environment. However, this professional development has allowed me to deepen various components of the learning environment. These components include, incorporating enhanced classroom management for tech use, digital citizenship and increased student collaboration. Research-based teaching strategies drive my growth as a teacher, and through these series of modules, I have refined my instruction and strengthened individual learning within my classroom.

Managing Technology

Through various resources from Module 2: Tools for Managing Classrooms in the Digital Age, I have restructured classroom procedures to incorporate technology specific instructions and troubleshooting. For example, multiple assignments posted in Google classroom now have activity instructions and a checklist displayed along with the assignment so that students can self-pace and self-monitor. Three of the five days, teacher-led small group is a part of station rotations. I will be creating a troubleshooting document that includes common user and computer errors. I will also assign one of my tech-savvy students as the next 'go to' if the troubleshooting list does not solve the issue. This will allow me to conduct small groups uninterrupted and limit student frustrations with technology use. Students have assigned computers and are responsible for their devices. This small, but effective, technique increases the lifespan of the technology by holding students accountable which helps maintain the integrity of the machines.

Incorporating Technology

Resources such as *Differentiating with Technology* (Stanford et al. 2010), has provided with me with the tools necessary to incorporate technology in various ways. Students are given even

more choice in process and product. Students are able to increase their creativity through use of programs such as Padlet, FlipGrid, PiktoChart and GoogleChart. Students live in a very technology-based environment, giving students the option to input and output through technology has increased their engagement.

Through Common Sense Education (2019), I have a sound plan for seamless inclusion of responsible digital citizenship along with technology use. Posters/anchor charts will be displayed around the room and the computer cart to help ensure responsible use of technology. For example, credible websites to use for research (.edu or .gov) or symbols for safe website use. Anchor charts will include appropriate language for collaboration such as classroom group chats and discussions. Currently, we have circles within the classroom where we spend time discussing various topics with students. This built in time will allow us to have an open dialogue about sensitive subjects such as ensuring privacy and security, the lasting impacts of cyberbullying and copyright issues. Through this course I have developed set standards that will help foster a group of responsible digital citizens and appropriate use of technology.

Enhanced Collaboration

Collaboration within the classroom is sometimes slow to develop. Students are hesitant to speak in front of peers for various reasons which can limit interactions within the classroom. Students are accustomed to the use of social media for communication. Allowing students to use this tool within the classroom could be an easy fix for increasing communication within the learning environment. Through use of online discussions, students are given an alternate outlet to collaborate with peers in a low pressure setting.

Through the UTeach blended learning professional development I have been able to create an action plan that was easy to implement immediately. The templates for technology options within my lesson plans have increased student engagement. For example, giving students the option to type their KWL or work vocabulary in Padlet immediately increased engagement. My students were openly excited about the opportunity to work collaboratively to create a 3D model of transcription and translations through various product options such as computer programs or time lapse. Although the current changes are small, they have been effective in enhancing individualized learning within my classroom.

Blended Learning Reflection Paper: Paige Nohavitza, Sinton Elementary, 4th Grade English Language Arts Teacher, Sinton ISD, Texas

In this reflection paper, Paige Nohavitza offers the fresh perspective of a first year teacher taking on the roles of blended learner and leader on her campus as a result of her experience with the UTeach Blended Learning course series. Paige recognizes that the time and effort she put into these courses

helped her build a trove of resources and strategies that have already transformed her classroom from one semester to the next. She has seen marked increase in student engagement and uses purposeful technology to help close gaps in learning and target individual growth in her students. Paige has given her students relative autonomy in her blended classroom, guiding self-paced learning within blended frameworks and promoting student voice in both small group settings and in development of classroom management strategies to maintain focus in this dynamic and highly engaged setting.

This is my first year teaching and it has been a lot. I have learned so much about teaching and being in the classroom. As a first year teacher, it is hard enough as it is trying to learn the ropes of everything. Originally, I wanted a math position and was given 4ᵗʰ grade ELA…. YIKES! So having to literally re-learn all the basic skills was tough! Then I had the bright idea to take this course. Although this might have been a bit more than I could chew, I am so thankful I ended up taking on the task.

This class has helped me grow tremendously from the first semester to the second. It has especially given me a sense of leadership and belonging in our planning meetings (since I was the only fourth grade ELA teacher to take this course). I have noticed my co-workers (some who have 15+ years teaching experience) coming to me asking for ideas and help in their classrooms because they like what they see when they come into my blended classroom. I am so proud to work for a district that puts so much into professional development and helping teachers grow! This has been extremely beneficial for me. This course has taught me valuable teaching strategies that will be crucial for meeting the needs of my students now and in the upcoming years.

In my classroom my main goal is for my students to be **engaged** in their learning! I want them to be interested in the content and understand how important this material is for their future. Technology is the future, and it is proven that one teacher cannot do it alone. This Blended Learning course has shown me SO many different applications and learning tools that I have begun using to assist me to differentiate in my classroom in order to close students' gaps. My students have been so much more engaged this semester than they were last semester and in my opinion that is showing immense progress. I am so proud of them and us for making this transition together.

I LOVE that my kids are getting to learn at their own speed and that our technology programs are catering to their individual specific needs. This has made their learning more meaningful to them and me.

I have also really enjoyed teaching in a small group setting. This has allowed me to get more personal with my students and their needs. We are able to communicate better with each other about learning goals and how to achieve them. I have noticed my students not being afraid to ask questions when we are in a small group whereas before nobody would say anything during a lesson.

It was like teaching to a blank wall. The teacher-student interaction has by far been one of my favorite takeaways.

Another discussion this class has brought to my attention is getting to discuss with my kids how to responsibly use technology and how to do the right thing even when they think no one is watching. This has lead to some great circle time in my class and the student input has been incredible. It has been a warming experience to let the reins go a little and still see that my kids are being responsible on their Chromebooks. When a student is engaged in his/her learning they are less likely to be goofing off. Have found that statement to be so true in my own classroom! I am so proud of them!

In conclusion this course has been extremely eye-opening and I am so glad I took it. Technology is the future and I am excited our district and campus are fully embracing this next level of learning! Fully implementing blended learning into my classroom will take time, but I am grateful for this foundation. I am excited to see the way my classroom will transform next year!

Blended Learning Reflection Paper: Johanna Ruiz-Siso, Bilingual Teacher, Center Elementary School, Center ISD, Texas

In this reflection paper Johanna Ruiz-Siso shares her unique perspective as a teacher new to Texas and to the United States. Johanna's experience with the UTeach Blended Learning course series validated some of her existing practices and gave her strong strategies to manage technology and encourage students to take ownership of their learning using targeted resources. She shares her tactics to model responsible use of technology and details specific programs she has used to guide interactive lessons. Johanna feels that blended options help her mostly ELL students better connect with lesson materials and learn visually to build language and content knowledge. She is excited to continue blended initiatives in her classroom and identifies areas where she will enhance classroom management to support student learning in this dynamic setting.

You may say that children and education are similar around the globe, but they are not. Every country has their own system, rules, procedures, routines, laws; and as an experienced teacher from another country during this first year of teaching in Texas, I have felt completely lost and without any experience. In addition to this, besides being a teacher, I am also a mom of an eight-year old boy who I am raising kind of old school, so all the adaptation has been a little overwhelming.

This being said, thanks to this training I have felt more confident in my everyday work. Not only because I have learned new things, but I have actually realized that I have been using blended learning in my classroom although I didn't know the labels and correct procedures until I did this training. I also feel very blessed that my son is experiencing as a student a blended learning classroom because I know that it will improve his learning experience.

After doing the classroom management training, I realized that I need to implement specific rules for the use of technology. The transition between traditional and technology classroom, needs rules so that the students can move faster. I also need rules for when my students put away the equipment and to put them in charge. In my country we did use technology but only the teacher not the students. Here, since I have a small group of students, they are able to have a Chromebook each. Each child can work alone on their Chromebook and they are responsible for it. At the beginning, I gave jobs to certain children so that it would be easier but after the course I realized that it is very important that each child takes care of their equipment and are held responsible for it. This is the first change that I have been making in my classroom.

Another change that I have been working on is that the students are in charge of their own work and they do it independently. Of course, I introduce, explain, and model but they are the ones that show the product of their learning. For example, a couple of days ago I made a presentation using Nearpod. I did a live class where I explained the content for them to understand but afterwards they worked on the activities on their own. I was kind of anxious because I felt that it was going to be a big mess, but it was not. They did an excellent job. The only thing that I need to reinforce and do better is time management. As I have said throughout the modules, when my students are engaged they are very, very slow when I need to change subjects and/or transition. I will be using the apps suggested in the course to make this better.

I feel I made a good decision when I got in this course. It has been an eye opening and a win-win situation for me and my children, not only because I have learned a lot but my students are also learning and enjoying blended learning. With these new strategies my students will improve academically because all of them are ELLs and most of them are visual learners. Technology gives the opportunity to learn at their own style and pace. I am sure that I will see their improvement when I get feedback on their assessments because using these strategies will help them to be fully engaged and active learners.

Once more I need to state that it has been of great advantage being in this training. I am 100% sure that I will be using this knowledge for years to come as a teacher in Texas and if I get the opportunity to go back to my country to work as a teacher there, I will share the information with my colleagues. I am very grateful for the learning I acquired.

Blended Learning Reflection Paper: Lori Trevino, Elementary School Principal, Sinton Elementary, Sinton ISD, Texas

In this reflection paper, Lori Trevino shares her enthusiastic response to the UTeach Blended Learning course series, and details the transformative effect that this professional development experience has had on teachers across her elementary campus. Lori and her teachers enjoy a 1:1 setting and many

educators were already employing station rotation as a way to facilitate small group learning and interactions. She describes how teachers have collectively developed a growth mindset and integrated purposeful technology into stations as a result of this course experience. Lori has noticed increased collaboration between her teachers, as they meet together to share ideas and develop student trackers. She herself models blended tools and frameworks in staff meetings and professional development sessions. Lori is overwhelmingly positive about her experience with UTeach and her teachers are as well.

I have been an administrator for over 15 years and I have never experienced so much positive energy over any other type of PD. This course has staff excited about trying out different types of technology, differentiation strategies and management tools. Teachers are visiting each other's classroom, talking about station rotations and providing staff development in the area of technology. As the principal, I have also been motivated to conduct my faculty meetings using a blended learning model. My goal is to run most of my beginning of the year PD using this model.

Our campus is very fortunate to have chrome books for every student. But, before this course we had not given any thought to setting and teaching rules and expectations for our devices. How to access them, put them up, transport them etc. Teachers are already planning on coming up with some grade level expectations for how students handle their devices and setting aside time for them to practice those expectations at the BOY (beginning of the year).

Some of my teachers were already using station rotations before this course, but now I see them incorporating different types of technology into their rotations. I have seen teachers use flip grid to explain to students how to work out a problem and then they have their students use it to explain their thinking and the steps used to get the right answer. Pear deck has also been used in many classrooms after our 5th grade science teachers presented PD on how they were using it in their room. Many of the teachers are using goggle classroom and or slides to present lessons. I've witnessed teachers trying station rotations for the first time, while others have taken their stations to a whole new level with the addition of "must do and may do." I've been trying to get my math teachers to incorporate stations into their lessons since I became the principal of this campus 5 years ago. Through the blended learning courses, they have all become believers and have started to use stations in their classrooms. One of our goals for next year is to work on differentiation and student choice in our stations. Right now everyone is doing the same thing at each of their stations, except at the teacher station. Teachers are working on what students will do when they meet with their small groups.

Having students set goals for themselves and track their data is another thing that has gotten better since we began this course. Grade levels are working together to come up with ways that they can have students track data and set goals. This is a change from what we had previously done. Historically, teachers have been the ones who track student data to make decisions for students.

I've already seen so many positive changes in our classrooms. All of the blended learning strategies/ideas that we have learned are going to help our students become more successful and help fill in any individual gaps. Teachers seem excited to try out new things and the students are excited about learning and practicing in different ways. Even teachers who are not part of this course are incorporating BL into their classrooms because they are caught up in the excitement of the other teachers. Many of them plan to sign up for the course if it is offered again.

This is my 33rd year in education and this is without a doubt the best professional development I've ever had. It makes me want to go back into the classroom and teach. I would be a much better teacher after completing this blended learning course. Any PD I plan from now on is going to incorporate blended learning strategies.

For more information and to discuss your professional development needs, please contact:

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