TRIBES: A New Way of Learning and Being Together

Geared towards elementary teachers and principals

Instructor: Denise McFarlin, Jim Asher

Credits: Two (2) graduate credits

Course Number: ED & HUD 795-2, 727 (#0160C)

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing (Must have earned a bachelor’s degree)

Location: Fort Howard Elementary School, LMC, 520 Dousman Street, Green Bay

Dates: Friday, February 3 (4:30-7:30 p.m.);
Saturday, February 4 (8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.);
Monday, February 13 (4:30-7:30 p.m.);
Tuesday, February 28 (4:30-7:30 p.m.);
Friday, March 3 (4:30-7:30 p.m.);
Saturday, March 4, 2006 (8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.);
and a minimum of 3 hours of classroom application time.

Course Emphasis:

We will be learning how to develop a democratic group process not just a curriculum or set of cooperative activities. A “process” is a sequence of events that lead to the achievement of an outcome. The outcome of this process is to develop a positive environment that promotes human growth and learning. It requires learning how to build a community through three stages of group development using a set of agreements among the students or adults with whom you are working.

Throughout the process people learn to use specific collaborative skills, and to reflect both on the interaction and the learning that is taking place. This process not only establishes a caring environment for cooperative learning but also provides structure for positive interaction and continuity for working groups whether in the classroom, the faculty, the administration or the parent community. By using this process we hope to assure the healthy development of every child so that each has the knowledge, skills, and resilience to be successful in a rapidly changing world.

Course Requirements:

1. Participate actively in all class activities
2. Complete reading of required texts
3. Complete assigned class activities
4. Develop an implementation plan for cooperative learning in your classroom or for your staff
Required Reading:


- Distributed articles

Course Objectives:

You will have the opportunity to learn more than cooperative learning activities; you will experience the process of developing community. This is done in three stages: Inclusion, Influence and then Community. You will discuss when and how to use cooperative learning strategies and how to adapt them for your classrooms.

Module 1  Finding Our Way to the Future
Participants will discover the meaning and impact of a new pattern of interaction over the traditional approach for learning and working with students. Recognize how changes in the world require new skills and competencies with a deliberate focus on human development and resiliency.

Homework:
- Read: How Schools Can Foster Resiliency in Children
- Chapter 1 & 2 TRIBES

Module 2  Learning about Learning
Participants will learn how to teach collaboratively to build community inclusion and experience how this process creates a positive learning environment and a student-centered classroom. Understand how cooperation promotes academic achievement and development and how this supports brain compatible learning.

Homework:
- Read: Chapters 3 & 4 TRIBES
- Introduce the community circle in your own classroom; reflect upon the effect it has with your students

Module 3  Creating the Learning Community
Participants will experience how the sequential stages and agreements of this process build a learning community. Learn how to teach a simple set of agreements to various grade levels and become members of an on-going learning group. Discuss strategies to use for conflict resolution including I-messages. An overview of multiple intelligences will be presented along with a discussion of how this might impact your classrooms.

Homework:
- Introduce the agreements to your class; reflect on the experience.
Module 4  **Building Tribes**  
Participants will learn how to work together in cooperative groups, how to express feelings and manage conflict. Design three types of reflective questions to support student learning, and design a sequence of steps to initiate this process in your classrooms.  
**Homework:**  
Read: Chapter 5 TRIBES  
Write three reflective questions to use in your classroom following a cooperative work experience; reflect upon how these questions helped to clarify the learning

Module 5  **Learning Through Collaboration**  
Participants will learn to facilitate the stage of Influence to develop self-worth and respect for diversity. Experience strategies for individual and group decision-making and collaborative problem-solving. Discuss how all of these strategies will impact what you do in the classroom.  
**Homework:**  
Read: Chapters 6, 7, 8 TRIBES  
Use and reflect upon the group problem-solving process

Module 6  **Reaching All**  
Participants will learn to teach students steps to identify group dynamics and resolve conflict. Generate ways to assure that the essential elements of cooperative learning are included in learning experiences.  
**Homework:**  
Write a lesson plan using five (5) elements of a cooperative learning lesson, use and then reflect.

Module 7  **Designing Learning Experiences**  
Participants will discuss the role of the teacher in the new pattern of interaction. Integrate academic curricula into their strategies. Create lesson plans that integrate content and collaborative skill objectives.  
**Homework:**  
Read: Chapter 9, 10 TRIBES  
Develop and share a plan to implement the TRIBES process into your own classroom
Module 8  **Bringing It Altogether**  
Participants will discuss ways to involve students in the assessment of learning experiences. Generate ways to involve the whole school in support of student learning and development. Define ongoing support and staff development. We will summarize the community learning experience and celebrate together.

**Grading:**

1. Active participation in course  
2. Text Review  
3. Assignments  
4. Development of implementation plan (2-4 pp)  

Wisconsin Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure

1. **Teachers know the subjects they are teaching.**  
The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines she or he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils.

2. **Teachers know how children grow.**  
The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development.

3. **Teachers understand that children learn differently.**  
The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.

4. **Teachers know how to teach.**  
The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology, to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

5. **Teachers know how to manage a classroom.**  
The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

6. **Teachers communicate well.**  
The teacher uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. **Teachers are able to plan different kinds of lessons.**
The teacher organizes and plans systematic instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, pupils, the community, and curriculum goals.

8. **Teachers know how to test for student progress.**
The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the pupil.

9. **Teachers are able to evaluate themselves.**
The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

10. **Teachers are connected with other teachers and the community.**
The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support pupil learning and well-being and acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

**Wisconsin Standards for Administrator Development and Licensure:**

2. The administrator leads by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared by the school community.

3. The administrator manages by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to pupil learning and staff professional growth.

5. The administrator models collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

6. The administrator acts with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

7. The administrator understands, responds to, and interacts with the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context that affects schooling.