



# National Urban Alliance

## New York City Public Schools District Five Literacy Retreat

*June 18 & 19, 1999*

*Renaissance Westchester Hotel, White Plains, New York*

### Goals

The goals of this two day retreat are to:

- Agree on the essential elements of K-8 literacy
- Identify district programs and initiatives related to literacy
- Develop a plan for an integrated literacy support system
- Develop an effective communication system

### Process

National Urban Alliance will model 'best practices' to coordinate the development of a district literacy plan. These practices will support constructive diversity, ensure high expectations for all, and enhance the school as a community of learners.

### Outcomes

The participants will:

1. articulate their vision of literacy
1. determine how district programs and initiatives support literacy
1. create a literacy action plan that is a tool for change
1. identify components of an effective communication system

### Schedule

**Fri 18 June 1999**

*8:00 – 4:30*

Literacy awareness and district assets.

*7:00 – 8:30*

Create a representation of the District Five literacy model.

**Sat 19 June 1999**

*8:00 – 2:15*

Develop a literacy action plan.

National Urban Alliance for Effective Education at Teachers College Columbia University

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## NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999

Fri 18 June 1999

- **Introduction** by Askia Davis
- **Database** – ongoing to model the importance of gathering and sorting information as part of learning for understanding
- **Read a book - Yo! Yes!**  
Purpose: To model literacy in action including guided reading, showing pictures (why and when), sharing student work (importance of publishing), and to model the joy of reading.
- **Ice breaker and Introductions.** Each participant will introduce themselves within their groups sharing a hobby or something you would like to learn in their Idea Book with a drawing or symbol. Will model pair-share and have participants pair-share. The responses will be recorded on a large sheet to link commonalities to access amongst each other. They will post on the wall (ownership).
- **Outline goals** for the two days. Link with the opening book and ice breaker.
- **Prior Knowledge - CB Dialog.** The participants will participate with an exercise/strategy that investigates the importance of prior knowledge and the ability to understand and communicate with languages. Will include a reflection entry in the idea book after the CB exercise on what kinds of prior knowledge influence literacy learning. The participants will pair-share, then create quick list from room contributions.  
*Purpose: The importance of prior knowledge and understanding the communication process.*

- **Idea Book** - Illustrate a learning environment that would foster literacy. You may label your illustrations. While illustrating, write any initiatives that support the learning environment list in back of idea book. The exercise will include:
  - Discussing Idea Book, then modeling – first modeled by Susan and Robert
  - Sketching in your Idea Book
  - Pair-share
  - Sharing in larger group
  - Creating a group poster
  - Taking a gallery walk

*Purpose: The purpose of the idea book/journal is to model use of a tool for reflection, observation, and research that provides a vehicle to reflect, understand, and access ideas. In all cases the facilitators will model using their Idea Book as well which parallels classroom modeling and usage. The purpose of this specific entry is to facilitate a global view of what supports or creates barriers to literacy.*



1. Tabs for two sections in back of idea book include

1. a running list of initiatives in district and ideas for professional development
1. transition ideas

## NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999

Fri 18 June 1999 *continued*

- **Initiatives and Programs.** List-Group-Label on post-it notes. The participants will list the various programs and initiatives in the district, then group and label. This will be followed by a group sharing that will provide insight and understanding to the varied projects in the district and how they link with each other.
  - Group of four list all programs and initiatives
  - Model each group classifying them
  - Two groups of four share
  - Group of eight combines and create a tree map – on back of each card summarize very briefly what it does
  - Classify how they work together.
  - Put on wall
  - Gallery walk

In their Idea Book the participants will list three initiatives that they didn't know about or ones the gallery walk caused them to rethink. After listing the initiatives, they will respond to how and why it effected them &/or how they will connect with.

*Purpose: To build a knowledge of all the possible support systems that exist in the district.*

- **Compare and contrast programs** starting with Literacy Enhancement (primary grades) or the Smart Process (grades 5-8) and Harcourt Brace series as a model.

Regroup how we are seated

Model comparing and contrasting Susan and Robert with a double bubble

Double bubble of descriptive characteristics of two programs in groups of four

Two groups of four share

One or two groups share to create discussion

*Purpose: To develop an understanding of how different programs and initiatives can coexist and support the overall learning and literacy goals.*

- **Idea Book** - reflections on things that were learned during the day and how they will be implemented and impact your classroom.

- **Read a book** – a student created book.



**NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999**  
**Fri 18 June 1999** *continued*

**7:00 – 8:30 Evening Session**

An activity to create a representation of the District Five literacy model that includes the role of each of the group members. The group can use music, drawing, dance, poetry and/or mathematics. They cannot describe or lecture. Use of found objects is strongly encouraged. You will have forty five minutes to develop your off Broadway performance piece.

NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999  
Fri 19 June 1999

• **Read a book - On the Day You Were Born.**

• **Idea Book** something(s) you discussed or thought about after Friday's session

Purpose: To parallel with students and their informal discussions and the importance of communication.

• **Professional Reading** - Will use an anticipation guide of multiple statements to generate discussion while facilitating an insight into the importance of understanding how the brain works. The book used with the anticipation guide will be Teaching with the Brain in Mind.

Purpose: To model the importance of sharing professional growth with professional books on-site. Also to model the importance of knowing your audience (i.e. children).

• **Professional Development.** Look at idea book and share your ideas of professional development

Purpose: To develop buy-in and knowledge of what is needed to successfully implement professional development.

• **Idea Book** - entry on what you want from professional development, and what you'll provide for professional development.

• **Road map of the upcoming year** in regards to literacy development. Each main part of the flow map will be detailed including what is needed to implement, what it will support, and how we'll assess. It will include what are the roles of each of the constituents including teachers, staff, site administration, district administration, NUA, and various programs and initiatives.

The participants will list all the activities required for the district, school, administrators, teachers, and other role players (e.g. Harcourt Brace) to make integrated literacy happen in the district. The composite list will initially be created by:

- Working in groups of four
- Sharing and combining in groups of eight
- Having the large group list the players next to each activity
- Prioritize and sequence the activities
- Looking at the priorities
- Building communication
- Developing a timeline
- Looking at the resources

*Purpose: To create a living map to navigate from that supports buy-in and vision.*



NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999  
Fri 19 June 1999 *continued*

**Guiding Questions**

**Learning and Teaching: Guiding Questions**

How can we identify factors (district and building levels) that foster or impede achievement of literacy goals.

How can each of the district and building level initiatives support the District literacy goals?

How can District Five schools strengthen their operations to support the district mission and literacy goals?

How will we provide and recognize evidence of success in literacy education?

**Support Timeline: Guiding Questions**

How can we identify and employ existing district, building, and community resources to support effective literacy education?

What supplementary district, building, and community resources are needed to support effective literacy education?

What kinds of professional development opportunities and structures are needed to support effective literacy education?

**Communication: Guiding Questions**

How can we effectively communicate the mission and literacy goals to all members of the District Five community?

What kinds of processes and structures will enable us to document and communicate progress towards the district literacy goals?

- **Communication** - Will do a circle map on types of communication, how they come about, and what ones support our needs. This will be followed by how we can effectively implement the ones that support our needs. This will include looking at electronic mail to facilitate regular communication and understanding.

*Purpose: To keep focus between participant sessions and build from our sessions together.*

- **What Next** - How to we keep the energy and potential rolling.
- **Idea Book** - Three most important things you are walking away with from the past two days. Then reflect on how they will affect you and what you need to do to be successful with them.
- **Documentation** - What is it and how does it support our goals.
- **Read a poem** - June Jordan &/or Langston Hughes (Dreams)

## NYC District Five Retreat Outline 18 & 19 June 1999

### Timeframe

#### Fri 18 June 1999

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast

9:00 – 9:30 Greetings

9:30 – 12:15 Work Groups

12:15 – 1:15 Lunch

1:15 – 4:30 Work Groups

4:30 – 7:00 Dinner & On Your Own

7:00 – 8:30 Work Groups

#### Sat 19 June 1999

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast

9:00 – 12:15 Work Groups

12:15 – 1:15 Lunch

1:15 – 2:15 Work Groups



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