

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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### **OVERVIEW**

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The Discovery Center of Springfield (DCS) contracted with the Southwest Missouri State University Institute for School Improvement to conduct an evaluation of their Technology Innovation Challenge Grant. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine, for years two and three of the grant (6/1/02 to 5/31/04), the level of use, user profiles, usability and overall effectiveness of the distance learning programs provided by the DCS. This evaluation addresses the amount and types of professional development and support provided to teachers and the value and appropriateness of the curriculum/content and materials provided to students as perceived by project participants.

### **METHODOLOGY**

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User Profile Data: The Distance Learning Coordinator will provide to the ISI evaluation team all data necessary to profile those schools/teachers that participate in the distance learning programs. School profiles will include age/grade level of students participating, total school population, percent of students at each school receiving free/reduced lunch, and other descriptive data as deemed appropriate by the evaluation team.

Teacher Survey: The evaluation team will revise and develop more fully the existing survey questionnaire designed to gauge teachers' perceptions of DCS's distance learning programs. The revised questionnaire will be designed in such a manner to allow for examination of teacher perceptions of the value of the services provided, usefulness, appropriateness, and effectiveness of curriculum and materials provided as part of the program, level of teacher usage, and the overall teacher perceived impact on student involvement and learning. Survey questionnaires will also address teacher perceptions of the level of professional development and support received during the programs.

Principal Survey: The evaluation team will develop a survey questionnaire designed to gauge principals' perceptions of their teachers' participation in the DCS's distance learning programs. The survey instrument will include a profile of administrator perceptions regarding the value of the services provided, usefulness and effectiveness of curriculum, the school's level of usage, and the overall perceived impact on student learning. Surveys will also address principals' perceptions of the level of professional development and support received by teachers during the programs.

Activity Observations: Member(s) of the evaluation team will attend three to four activities and observe interactions between participants and presenters. Information will be

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collected to examine effectiveness of technology, communication techniques, facilitation techniques, and the overall learning environment.

Participant Interviews: The evaluation team will collect anecdotal information from on-site interviews with program participants regarding effectiveness of technology, feasibility and practicality of technology, presenter level of performance, level of professional development for teachers, content relevance and usability.

Telephone Interviews: The evaluation team will contact by telephone a random sample of teacher participants to obtain information regarding effectiveness, availability, usability, appropriateness and overall impact of the program and its content.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

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- **Dial-Out Video Conferencing**

On average, schools identified as “high” professional development sites had higher percentages of students scoring at the proficient and advanced levels on both the Communication Arts and Mathematics sections of the MAP, regardless of grade level, elementary or secondary. Tables 30a, 30b and 31 along with Figures 30a-30d and 31a-b display these data graphically (see pages 99-103).

- **Dial-In Video Conferencing**

On average, schools identified as “high” professional development sites also had a higher percentage of principals defining their school’s involvement with the RPDC as “active.” Table 32a and 32b with Figures 32a and 32b show these data (see pages 105-106).