

2018

# Results of a Common Core Mathematics Training Program: Veteran Teachers' Perspectives

Evelyn Seeve

Daemen College, [eschachn@daemen.edu](mailto:eschachn@daemen.edu)

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## Recommended Citation

Seeve, E. (2018). Results of a Common Core Mathematics Training Program: Veteran Teachers' Perspectives. In T. E. Hodges, G. J. Roy, & A. M. Tyminski (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 40th Annual Meeting of the North American Chapter of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education* (pp. 454). Greenville, SC: University of South Carolina & Clemson University.

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## RESULTS OF A COMMON CORE MATHEMATICS TRAINING PROGRAM: VETERAN TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

Evelyn Seeve  
Daemen College  
eschachn@daemen.edu

Keywords: Elementary School Education, Teacher Education/Professional Development, Standards

Research shows implementation of the Common Core Mathematics Standards can be challenging (Bostic & Matney, 2013), especially for veteran teachers (Burks, et al, 2015). The NCTM underscores the importance of professional development in assisting mathematics teachers in this area (NCTM, 2013). Design of this teacher training program considered features of form, duration, active learning, and coherence (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000) to address needs of experienced teachers struggling with implementing the CCSS-M. Research questions included: (1) In which ways, if any, will a one-year Common Core professional development training influence experienced elementary teachers' mathematics instruction? (2) What are the teachers' perspectives regarding influences of the training on their students' math performance and communication? (3) Which features of the training do the teachers report most useful in improving their mathematics instruction? Which additional features are recommended?

Training for teachers of grades 1-6 in one private girls' school included one session exploring mathematics practice standards using video demonstration and simulated collaborative problem solving as well as Common Core grade specific content applications. One model lesson targeting content and practice standards was conducted for each grade level, and follow-up consultations and classroom observations were conducted throughout the year. Seven veteran teachers participated in video recorded interviews for this study. Results were analyzed qualitatively.

### Results and Implications

Initial results indicate all teachers reported influences of the training on their mathematics instruction, such as implementing more collaborative tasks, using deeper questioning, emphasizing strategy instruction and justification of solutions, and using more precise math language. Reported changes for students included more willingness to take risks, use of varied strategies, and improvement in mathematics communication skills. Teachers highlighted features of the training that helped shape their instruction, and recommended more consistent coaching for planning instruction in particular content areas. Findings of this project indicate ways in which mathematics professional development may influence teaching practices and students' learning. Features of this training project have import for researchers and practitioners designing mathematics teacher professional development.

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