

PATH (Project For Active Teaching Of History): A History Education Community Partnership

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Abstract

The Project for Active Teaching of History (PATH) is designed as a history education community collaborative to enhance the teaching and learning of American history. This paper will provide research findings, critical analysis, and application ideas and issues regarding PATH. The research perspectives focus on achievement of project goals and objectives in the areas of “powerful” teaching and learning and professional development and will focus on case studies regarding the project’s success in improving American history teaching and learning. PATH integrates summer seminars, colloquia, online support, project development, and various outreach projects. A second component, ePATH (electronic Project for the Active Teaching of History), has been established to provide statewide outreach through videoconferencing and additional online support.

1.0 Introduction

American history teachers must possess deep knowledge of time, places, people, and ideas to be able to design their courses, choose topics to stress and questions to ask, in depth or breadth, select materials, deal honestly with student inquiry, and teach to keep student interest alive. American history teachers who do not have a strong college background in American history must undertake intensive professional development. Professional development programs must be in place to help American history teachers pursue their studies. The professional development should be a collaborative effort of all stakeholders. Moreover, college education and history programs must work with museums and the schools to work as partners combining historical content with subject-based pedagogical methods (Enlarging the Profession, 1997). American history teachers must be able to guide students through the exploration of vital unifying themes and narratives of human experiences in American history: 1) civilization, cultural diffusion, and innovations; 2) human interaction with the environment; 3) values, beliefs, political ideas, and institutions; 4) conflict and cooperation; 5) comparative history of major developments; and 6) patterns of social and political interaction (Building a United States History Curriculum, 1997).

American history teachers must be able to take students beyond the memorization of facts and dates and help them develop “History Habits of the Mind”. The Bradley Commission concluded that students must not only know the facts, but also the “why”. Students must become active learners; teaching and learning must be student-centered, challenging, integrative, issues-based, and active. In the field of history, active learning includes the collection, analysis, and interpretation of historical documents, artifacts, and other kinds of information. These sources of information may include diaries and letters, visual and material objects, or personal recollections obtained through oral history interviews (Framework for the 1994 U.S. History Assessment of the National Assessment of

Educational Progress, 1999; Sims, 1998). Teaching and learning American history should also include the integration of a variety of texts including film, music, art, and literature, as well as a variety of teaching and learning strategies.

Recent scholarship suggests that history education is most effective, especially with economically disadvantaged students with Low English Proficiency, when students are challenged to become active investigators, not simply passive recipients of knowledge, and are encouraged to think critically about the past and its legacies for the present. A growing body of literature examines the benefits of active learning in the discipline of history and assesses practical strategies for creating an active learning environment in the classroom (Stearns, Seixas, and Wineburg, 2000).

2.0 Rationale

The purpose of PATH is to provide a collaborative effort to raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of American history as a separate subject. The teaching of American history is crucial not only to student achievement, but also to the future of our democratic nation. According to the National Standards for United States History: Exploring the American Experience, "history opens to students the great record of human experience, revealing the vast range of accommodations individuals and societies have made to the problems confronting them, and disclosing the consequences that have followed the various choices that have been made. By studying the choices and decisions of the past, students can confront today's problems and choices with a deeper awareness of the alternatives before them and the likely consequences of each" (1997). Along the same vein, the introduction of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (Chapter 113 of the Texas Education Code) states that "the content, as appropriate for the grade level or course, enables students to understand the importance of patriotism, function in a free enterprise society, and appreciate the basic values of our state and nation as referenced in the Texas Education Code" (2001).

Texas students have the opportunity to experience separate American history courses at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In Grade 5, students learn about the history of the United States from its early beginnings to the present with a focus on colonial times through the 20th century. In Grade 8, students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. In the high school course, United States History Studies Since Reconstruction (the second part of a two-year study of U.S. History that begins in Grade 8) students study the history of the United States since Reconstruction to the present. American history and education professors have identified the need for more pre-service knowledge and pedagogy for future American history teachers. The state, the regional service center, and the school districts have identified a need to address content and pedagogy for in-service teachers, many who may not have majored specifically in American history. Both the national and the state of Texas assessments indicate that there is a need to improve the teaching of American history.

The 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in United States History administered to national students in grades four, eight, and twelve found that a large majority of the students failed to achieve the "Proficient" level, which signifies solid or competent performance. Alarming is the percentage of students who performed at the "Below Basic" level: 36% of fourth graders, 39 % of eighth graders, and 57 % of twelfth graders. This report also indicated that students identified as white and Asian tended to have higher scores than those identified as black or Hispanic. Factors at home affecting the scores included parent education level, amount of time spent watching television, access to magazines and newspapers, discussion of schoolwork, and homework. A factor at school that may have affected student performance was the type of resources used regularly in the classroom. Students need to use primary sources materials that engage them in higher-level thinking. Texas presently administers two standards based assessments.

Texas students are assessed in American history content in Grade 8 (Grade 8 Social Studies TAAS test) and at the end of the United States Studies course (United States End-of-Course test). Region IV preliminary results for the latest administration indicated that less than 80% of the students met minimum expectations while less than 10% mastered all objectives. The result show that if less than 50% was used as an indicator for "low performing" in

social studies 37 of the 226 school that administered the Grade 8 Social Studies TAAS test in Region IV would be rated “low performing” in social studies. The early indicator report for the new statewide assessment to be implemented in 2003 paints a grimmer picture, 127 of the 226 schools would be considered “low performing” in social studies. Intervention will be needed to effectively prepare teachers in American history content and pedagogy and to improve student performance as indicated on the new statewide assessments. Students’ study of American history should be exciting, interesting, and engaging.

3.0 Goals

The University of Houston College of Education and Department of History, Region IV Education Service Center, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and local schools are the collaborative partners in “Project for the Active Teaching of History” (PATH). The goal of the project is to develop and facilitate high-quality professional development programs, including an annual summer seminar and three colloquia a year, and to give teachers advanced instruction in American history and guidance in pedagogy, including the effective use of new classroom technologies. The project also includes programs to support school-based collaborative efforts among teachers, including monthly workshops, and creates a group of history “mentors” who will help novice classroom teachers as well as pre-service teachers and teacher education students.

The project is designed to improve teachers’ knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of American history by creating a comprehensive and sustainable collaborative program of professional development that can serve as a model for other school districts throughout the state and nation. This project emphasizes six key elements: (1) Improving teachers’ knowledge of American history as a separate subject matter within the core curriculum; (2) Identifying effective teaching strategies, including collaborative projects and hands-on, active-learning activities, that teachers can use to improve instruction and raise student achievement, especially among students with Low English Proficiency; (3) Training teachers to make effective use of new electronic communication and computer technologies, as well as older technologies, such as tape recorders, to stimulate history learning; (4) Creating a core group of experienced, knowledgeable, well-trained teacher-mentors who can serve as coaches for other teachers in their schools and for pre-service teachers and teacher training students at the University of Houston; (5) Providing a forum where professional historians, museum professionals, and classroom teachers can interact on an on-going basis and serve each others’ needs; and (6) Producing extensive online resources, model lesson plans, and project-oriented activities designed to transform the study of American history by emphasizing collaborative, hands-on projects and active student learning.

The elements of the project are designed to raise student achievement by improving teachers’ knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of American history as a separate subject. The teaching of American history is crucial not only to student achievement, but also to the future of our democratic nation. According to the National Standards for United States History: Exploring the American Experience, “history opens to students the great record of human experience, revealing the vast range of accommodations individuals and societies have made to the problems confronting them, and disclosing the consequences that have followed the various choices that have been made. By studying the choices and decisions of the past, students can confront today’s problems and choices with a deeper awareness of the alternatives before them and the likely consequences of each.”

4.0 Partners

Region IV ESC is experienced in creating and delivering quality professional development opportunities for educators in American History in the Houston area. Region IV ESC operates and maintains regional networks for Internet service and videoconferencing. Region IV provides a variety of outreach services to the Houston areas 54 school districts. The network operations center houses 53 servers and is updating by Fall 2001 to a 60-port videoconferencing hub with nationwide capability.

The University of Houston Department of History, which is strongly committed to American history, is a leader in training African American and Mexican American Ph.D.s. The University of Houston College of Education is the primary teacher education provider for the Houston area (approximately 4 million population). The

College of Education offers teacher certification, endorsements, and graduate degrees in a number of areas, including history.

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, which has one of the country's premier material culture collections at its Bayou Bend museum, is strongly committed to educational outreach. The American History collection at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston is considered one of the strongest in the country.

Through our collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and other partners, the PATH model includes strategies which promote the visual art as a "text" for powerful teaching and learning. Moving the visual arts beyond mere illustration and emphasizing using art as impetus to spark conversation and critical thinking is a primary objective of the PATH model. Sessions which introduced the American art collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston were coupled with discussion questions and teaching strategies that engaged the participants in the works of art.

5.0 Content, Pedagogy, And Technology

Long-term improvements in student achievement and the quality of history teaching will require us to strengthen teachers' content mastery, improve history pedagogy, and train teachers to use technology effectively. This project addresses each of these challenges.

5.1 Improving Content Mastery:

This project enhances teachers' mastery of historical content; ensure that they have detailed knowledge about such important topics as immigration and diversity in American history. The centerpiece of this initiative is an annual intensive summer seminar, taught by a team of professional historians at the University of Houston, who will focus on state American History curriculum standards. Supplementing the summer seminar is the academic year follow-up and three colloquia that will examine essential topics in U.S. history and explore how recent scholarship can be brought effectively into the classroom, and school-based workshops that will be held monthly during the academic year.

5.2 Improving Pedagogy:

Our goal as teachers is not only to improve our students' grasp of history but to stimulate a genuine love of history. Recent research indicates that students learn history most effectively when they are engaged in the process of discovery and interpretation of historical topics (Percoco, 1998, Kincheloe, 2002). They need to understand that history is not simply a fixed body of names and dates that they must memorize; they must also recognize that historical knowledge is a product of investigation, data collection, critical reading, and analysis. In addition to learning about such traditional historical topics as politics, war, and diplomacy, our students need to realize that every facet of our lives has a history. And further, we are convinced that history offers an ideal instrument for enhancing our students' geographical knowledge, their ability to interpret charts and graphs, their quantitative skills, and their ability to interpret written and visual texts. Through the summer seminar, colloquia, monthly workshops, and technology support, we promote "powerful" teaching and learning which has proven particularly effective in stimulating learning among disadvantaged students with Low English Proficiency.

5.3 Integrating Technology into History Education:

With proper training, teachers can use technology to promote historical learning and give students a chance to "do" history. The project emphasizes distinct uses of technology: (1) **Online Resources:** Valuable resources for teaching American history are readily available online. PATH has developed three web sites to support project goals (<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/>, <http://www.path.coe.uh.edu/>, <http://www.epath.coe.uh.edu/>). These sites provide content, pedagogy, and general support for teachers. (2) **Enhancing Communication:** New electronic technologies offer an exciting way to break down traditional classroom walls. This project allows teachers to pair classrooms and provide students with "electronic pen pals," students in schools in very different parts of the Region IV geographic

area. We have also have established an eClassrooms discussion board for sharing, discussion, and reflection. These tools allow us to publicize lectures, workshops, symposia, conferences, exhibits, and other events that teachers will find valuable for their own professional development. They also allow us to share teaching tips and suggest activities for students.

6.0 Professional Development Activities

6.1 An annual intensive summer seminar and ongoing academic year follow-up, divided into three segments: (1) A core component emphasizing content mastery led by professional historians with expertise state American history curriculum standards; (2) A grade-specific component focusing on history pedagogy led by specialists from the University of Houston College of Education and Region IV ESC, Social Studies curriculum developers, museum professionals, and master teachers that will emphasize the critical reading and application of primary sources; and (3) A component emphasizing ways to effectively integrate new technologies into the history classroom. This component shows teachers how to use tape records, digital cameras, and video cameras to create a local history archive; photographs and film clips as an entryway into American history; and online history resources using the sites developed (<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/>, <http://www.path.coe.uh.edu/>, <http://www.epath.coe.uh.edu/>). Participates in the summer seminar create instructional modules during the seminar and serve as mentor for other teachers in Region IV geographic area during the academic year.

6.2 Three colloquia during the school year featuring professional historians, Region IV ESC consultants, museum professionals, and specialists in historical pedagogy. One colloquium, hosted by the University of Houston History Department, focuses on content and the challenges of integrating essential topics in American history into the history curriculum; a second, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, concentrates on ways of promoting students' visual literacy and illustrate how material culture can bring American history to life; a third, at the University of Houston College of Education, demonstrates the "best practices" of master history teachers. Region IV ESC consultants participate in the planning and implementation of each colloquium.

6.3 Technology - PATH offers a website and listserv which publicizes our colloquia as well as other events of interest to history, social studies teachers, and pre-service teachers, including lectures, exhibits, activities at www.path.coe.uh.edu. Online resources, lesson plans, and hands-on, active-learning projects are developed and provided to assist teachers to improve history pedagogy. These modules emphasize: (1) using online resources effectively; (2) historical decision-making, such as President John Kennedy's decisions during the Cuban Missile Crisis; (3) connecting local and national history by focusing on such themes as movement and migration; (4) reading primary sources; and (5) Creating "wall-less" classrooms, which allow students to "do" history by conducting oral history interviews, visiting historical sites in the Region IV geographic area, and participating in service learning projects.

An opportunity for pre-service and teacher education students to work with experienced classroom teachers in planning and implementing American history projects and activities is also provided. Collaborating with an experienced teacher to plan and teach are not experiences that can be reproduced in a university classroom. By assigning pre-service teachers to work with experienced teachers, they not only have a chance to plan and teach, but to reflect on what happens in a classroom. One of our goals is to create a community of master teachers who will nurture and mentor future teachers and give them confidence that they will succeed.

Teachers were further supported by receiving a collection of teaching resources including books, music cds, photo cds of images, and other curriculum materials. To promote professional development and growth, each participant who completed their curriculum writing assignment was given 9 graduate credit hours and a family membership to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

7.0 ePATH – (Electronic Project For The Active Teaching Of History)

The Electronic Project for the Active Teaching of History (ePATH) is the second phase of the community collaboration, put in a larger context. This project, again between Region IV ESC, the University of Houston, and

the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is designed to improve teachers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of American history through statewide videoconferencing and web based support, including web cast, on-line discussions, and a project web site. Similar to PATH, this project integrates community collaboration through several intensive professional development initiatives.

8.0 Professional Development Activities

8.1 An annual intensive two-week video-conference summer seminar, divided into three segments: (1) A core unit emphasizing content mastery led by professional historians with expertise in pre-colonial American History to the present; (2) A component that involves American History teachers statewide, specialists from the University of Houston and Region IV ESC, museum professionals, and master teachers that will emphasize the critical reading of primary sources to improve American History teaching and learning; and (3) A component emphasizing ways to effectively integrate new technologies to improve American History teaching and learning. Participants in the summer seminar will create projects articulated to the Texas state American History standards and serve as mentors for other teachers in Texas during the academic year. Other teachers will be invited to attend the monthly seminars to be facilitated by summer seminar participants.

The video-conference summer seminar connected 5 sites around the state of Texas including Houston, Waco, San Antonio, Austin, and Edinburg. Daily activities included history lectures, art connections, lesson and unit applications, and discussions. Site visits were made to each area to ensure quality of the project and to provide face to face support. The video-conference seminar had approximately 80 participants from around the state.

II. Four Video conference colloquia during the school year featuring professional historians, Region IV ESC consultants, museum professionals, and American History teachers. One colloquium, hosted by the University of Houston History Department, will focus on content and the challenges of integrating essential topics in American history into the history curriculum; a second, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, will concentrate on ways of promoting students' visual literacy and illustrate how material culture can bring American history to life; a third, at the University of Houston, will focus on ideas for improving American History teaching and learning. Region IV ESC consultants will participate in the planning and implementation of each colloquium and in making connections to the state American History standards.

8.2 Two video conference colloquia have been conducted thus far. One colloquia included a lecture by Howard Zinn entitled America Past and America present and subsequent discussion and the other included a lecture by Steve Mintz on Modernism and History with art and history connections and discussion.

8.3 The American History Network for Texas Teachers will offer a website and listserv which will publicize our colloquia as well as other events of interest to history teachers, including lectures, exhibits, activities. The EPATH website (www.epath.coe.uh.edu) contains links to resources, lectures and colloquia, and other project activities.

8.4 Online resources, lesson plans, and hands-on, active learning projects to assist teachers to improve American History knowledge. These modules will emphasize: (1) using online resources effectively; (2) historical decision-making; (3) connecting local and national history by focusing on such themes as movement and migration; (4) reading primary sources; and (5) creating "wall-less" classrooms, which allow students to "do" history by conducting oral history interviews, visiting historical sites in Texas, and participating in service learning projects. The EPATH website (www.epath.coe.uh.edu) contains online resources, lessons, and units. A CD-ROM containing EPATH developed lessons and units is being produced.

8.5 The opportunity for American History teachers across the state to develop partnerships to improve American History teaching and learning. One of our goals is to create a statewide community of master teachers who will engage in ongoing statewide technology-based professional development projects in American History.

9.0 Project Evaluation

9.1 Specification and Measurement of Goals and Outcomes: This project has multiple goals: (1) to implement high quality professional development programs that will better prepare Region IV students to achieve higher standards in American history; (2) to implement sustained, ongoing collaboration between Region IV ESC, the University of Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and local schools through intensive summer seminars, colloquia, and school-based workshops; (3) to implement a mentoring and field-based training program for novice in-service teachers and pre-service teachers and teacher education students to better prepare them for the classroom; (4) to provide guidance to teachers in the use of technology and primary source documents; (5) to develop online instructional resources, lesson plans, and active-learning history activities; and (6) to document the project's outcomes.

We are assessing the project's benefits through a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures of teachers' professional development, their mastery of historical content, and student achievement. These include questionnaires, surveys, interviews, portfolios, and student performance assessments. A rigorous assessment of the project's impact on teacher preparedness and student learning is an essential aspect of this proposal. PATH offers an exciting to carefully evaluate the relative effectiveness of various kinds of interventions on teachers' professional development, their mastery of historical content, and student achievement.

9.2 Primary Assessment: Our evaluation plan is designed to assure accountability. An external evaluator will carefully monitor the implementation of the project to ensure that participants follow the proposal's timetable, spend the money according to the proposed budget, and institute the programs that the project describes.

9.3 Secondary Assessment: To evaluate the impact of the project on teacher effectiveness and student learning, we will obtain data using standardized and non-standardized tests, questionnaires, surveys, interviews, portfolios, and performance assessments. Student performance data will be statistically analyzed to determine the impact of our interventions on learning. Content analysis of questionnaires, on-site visits, and interviews will complement statistical analysis providing formative feedback for ongoing program improvement. Summary evaluation reports will include content analysis.

Both formative and summary evaluations occur. Formative evaluations will provide ongoing information to help project participants make adjustments to better achieve our objectives. Summary evaluations will assess how the objectives are achieved at specific project intervals and over the life of the project.

To assess student performance, we will use TAKS, the state-mandated test measuring content mastery; and TEKS, the recently adopted student performance standard for the state curriculum. To evaluate professional development efforts, we examine both short-term and long-term impact. All professional development activities are evaluated by participants on a project-developed evaluation form designed to measure the effectiveness of each training session. Follow-up evaluations will be carried out by project staff through observations, checklists, and surveys to determine the impact of our professional development activities on teacher effectiveness and the transfer of information into the classroom.

10.0 Sustainability

One of our project goals is to create a critical mass of representatives within Region IV and a partnership with the University of Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and local schools that will maintain the momentum of the project and add to its sustainability after the project period. We plan to do this in the following five ways: (1) **Professional Development:** During the project, participants have participated in the Summer Institutes and monthly workshops; they will continue to serve as a trained mentors within our school district. (2) **Creating Teaching Modules and Online Instructional Resources:** Each participant in our Summer seminars and workshops has created teaching modules, led in-service workshops within their individual schools, and will be trained in the effective use of the online instructional resources we will create. They will serve as catalysts for innovation within their schools. (3) **Creating a Support System for History Teachers:** This project creates

support mechanisms for teachers throughout the Region IV of which the most important will be a critical mass of trained mentors distributed across grade levels and schools. (4) **Creating Institutional Partnerships:** The partnerships forged during the project—between Region IV, the University of Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and local schools—are intended to persist after the project ends. These partnerships allow us to jointly apply for future projects and host professional development programs. (5) **Fostering the Next Generation of History Teachers:** The pre-service teachers and teacher education students who participate in this program and intern with a master teacher are better prepared to enter actual classrooms after their training has concluded. They are familiar with instructional technology, active, project-oriented learning, and ways to link local and national history.

11.0 Project Survey

88 participants

| Part 1: | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. The content of the project was consistent with the stated objective. | 64 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. The presenters demonstrated a knowledge of the subject matter. | 64 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Instructional techniques and methods used during the project contributed to a quality learning experience. | 48 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. The project provided opportunities for new / expanded ideas, methods, and skills. | 80 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. As a result of attending this session, my professional practices will improve. | 64 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Implementation of the knowledge and skills from this project will improve my student achievement. | 64 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. I am confident that my school/ district will support implementation of what I have learned in this project. | 48 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. The most significant thing I learned was: anecdotes, themes, social history, student centered approaches, alternative approaches to history, using a variety of resources – technology, art, music, etc., knowledge and skills for history | | | | |
| 9. I would like additional professional development on: additional themes, perspectives in history, technology, more information, content, engaging students, more diversity with history content, integrative approaches for history, visual arts | | | | |
| 10. This learning experience would have been more beneficial if: | | | | |
| a. The presenters... | | | | |
| b. The content... | | | | |
| More with literature, music, film, etc. | | | | |
| c. As a participant I... | | | | |
| Will integrate more art and literature | | | | |
| Integrate more technology | | | | |
| 11. What can you incorporate into a classroom lesson? How do you plan to incorporate this into your lessons? | | | | |
| Strategies and content | | | | |
| Film, art, and history | | | | |
| Stories in history | | | | |
| Technology for information and as a tool for teaching / project development | | | | |
| Music in the classroom | | | | |
| Developing and using the resource file | | | | |

12.0 Critical Issues

Despite the qualified success of PATH as expressed in the survey, and through first-hand discussion with the teachers enrolled in the program, several issues emerged:

1. How much of the PATH model creates a dichotomy between the education of the teachers and our goal of “exciting, interesting and engaging” pedagogical practice for the students? Does the program offer teachers this same process-oriented learning experience, or does it simply provide resources and methods? In other words, by allowing the teachers to treat PATH in this instrumental way, does the project further this disconnect between teaching and learning, and in the process, end up teaching these educators to treat their classrooms the same?
2. How much does PATH provide structure for the teachers to “do” history, and how much does PATH rely on traditional pedagogical methods? Is enough time provided for reflection and knowledge construction through dialogue, or is time filled through passive knowledge reception? Has any balance been sought or achieved? In effect, does PATH teach teachers to lecture?
3. Does PATH help its teachers develop these “history habits of the mind,” or does it rely on teachers to bring their own construction of what the teaching of history means without providing room to challenge those constructions?
4. How much does PATH allow for current issues, critical issues in the democratic practice, and emergent social issues to integrate with the content of the curriculum in the TEKS? Does PATH help these teachers weave the past into the present and the present into the past, or does it continue the largely ignored disconnect between the privileged past and its silent consequences in structuring a view on the present?
5. How “integrated” is the art component with the content component? Both structurally and in terms of content, does the use of art in history during the program help ground different approaches to the teaching of history, or does it merely add to the accumulation of knowledge to be dispensed in the classroom? Equally, how “integrated” is the technology component? Do the teachers become comfortable enough with technology to explore its possibilities in their classroom, or are they satisfied just to use it in performing the PATH assignments?
6. How successfully do the group projects require true collaboration, and how much do they rely on individuals acting alone and then knitting together their separate contributions? Does this pedagogy add to the teacher’s deeper understanding in the use of groups, or does it empower them to treat grouping as just an easier way to manage their class?

The reflection on these and other key critical issues will help PATH continue to refine its program to help these teachers of American history possess the depth and breadth of knowledge needed for their practice. Equally, by asking these questions of ourselves, we can model for these teachers how to apply the difficult and productive questions that will spur their students to think just as deeply about the content.

13.0 Summary

Survey results from the 88 respondents demonstrate that all agree or strongly agree with the statements provided suggesting great satisfaction with the project as a whole. The statement, “The project provided opportunities for new / expanded ideas, methods, and skills,” received the most favorable responses. Respondents suggested more professional development is needed regarding integrating art, literature, music, and film in history teaching and learning.

At this point, all basic objectives of PATH have been attained or are in the process of being attained. Changes include continued planning for ongoing support of participants and assessment of PATH project integration following the summer institute. PATH outreach will also continue to be enhanced with increased research and evaluation. Presentations, project development, and other outreach will also be enhanced. Additional technology support will also be included with further web and resource development.

The oral history archive project for PATH is still being planned and will commence at a later date. There is also a PATH mini-conference being planned that will offer a keynote speaker and a few breakout sessions conducted by past PATH participants. Ongoing support is provided, although participation online and in special projects diminishes as time passes. A particular goal is to improve on lesson plans and unit development and make those available online and in CD format.

Changes for PATH include continued planning for ongoing support of participants and assessment of EPATH project integration following the summer institute. EPATH outreach will also continue to be enhanced with increased research and evaluation. Presentations, project development, and other outreach will also be enhanced. Additional technology support will also be included with further web and resource development. A more thorough effort will be made to ensure 100 participants during the next summer video-conference seminar. There will also be efforts made to engage in doing history by using portable video-conferencing equipment. An example would be to conduct video-conferencing sessions at the Museum of Fine Arts or other places in the local community.

There is also an EPATH / PATH mini-conference being planned that will offer a keynote speaker and a few breakout sessions conducted by past EPATH / PATH participants. Ongoing support is provided, although participation online and in special projects diminishes as time passes. A particular goal is to improve on lesson plans and unit development and make those available online and in CD format.

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