

Whitewater Learning® E-Education for Educators
Highlights
5.15.16

Testimonials

In the beginning, all we had was the voice of our company stating what we believed to be true -- that Whitewater Learning online professional development content was designed to be, and was, the best product of its kind in the nation. Now, it is no longer only the founder's voice stating her goal. Here are some testimonials we have received to verify that our vision is being met...

"So much of what we have in the professional development field is similar in that they tend to spew out content, with not enough reflection and implementation. Whitewater is different. Whitewater courses provide for deeper understanding and a call to take action, which are the only things that can bring about change and improvement in schools." – *Kim Jones, former program coordinator and supervisor of the Whitewater Learning in conjunction with the University of North Dakota Professional Development for Educators Program partnership.*

"...On a side note we had our Professional Development Advisory committee meeting yesterday and staff were overwhelmingly positive about the Whitewater courses. This summer, some staff on their own met in small groups to do courses together and have the discussion piece. We have had over 300 courses taken since June, which I think is great and there is quite a variety of courses selected. The ASD series was really spoken highly of as was the Bullying sessions.

Thanks for all your work on this!"

Chris Hansen

Special Education Coordinator

SouthWest Metro Educational Cooperative

10.06.15

"The Whitewater Learning/UND courses are excellent. They are well written, timely, and interesting. The instructor really helps you learn. The additional resources were appropriate and informative. The written reflections throughout the course clarified thinking on the material covered and helped prepare one for the reflections required by the state of Minnesota for licensure renewal. Having taken a number of online courses the last few years, I can say that this class is user-friendly, logical and well explained. I would recommend these courses to any teacher. I feel I gained knowledge and clarified my thinking on a number of educational issues."

Elizabeth Petersen

Fargo, ND

(NOTE: Germaine is our highest consumer to date. She completed 61 modules and 219 hours of content in ONE year!!) "I am a Minnesota licensed Biology teacher. I also hold a Louisiana science teaching license. Thanks to Whitewater Learning I have successfully updated my MN teaching license. I taught in Brainerd MN for 10 years. Following my tenure in Brainerd I taught in Ruston Louisiana for 3 years. I have not been in the classroom for 6 years. I have 3 boys 8, 6, and 4. When my sons were born I was called to be the most important teacher in their lives, mom. My MN teaching license was up for renewal this year and I went on the hunt for a way to earn my credit hours. I found Whitewater here in International Falls through the local community college website. I was happy to pay for the hours and

thought the price reasonable when compared to the other companies I found online. **After starting I was hooked! The courses were thought provoking and made me hunger to be back in the classroom.**” [Emphasis added].

*Germaine Glieden-Lindquist
International Falls, MN*

“Once I have time again I want to do another subscription to Whitewater. I loved taking the modules and loved doing my own. :)”

*Jena Johnson
Byron, MN*

(Jena is the content expert for the module titled Music in Our Schools: A Pathway to Student Success.)

“I am SO glad I did this! It is so easy to navigate! Thank you for your personal touch! Really!”

*Mary Cornick
Eagan, MN*

“[I] am pleased to see the wide-ranging topics that expand to the professional development of all staff, not just teachers. This is a unique and useful feature I have not seen before.”

*Justin Tiarks
Principal
St. Paul City School*

“...It is a pleasure working with you and White Water Learning especially when the curriculum is top notch and in-depth. Thank you for choosing to work with UND. Have a great day!”

Lynette Krenelka, UND

Regarding the UND Whitewater course: Bullying

This class has been wonderful. Very well laid out and a great learning experience.”

Katie Adolphson

Grand Forks, North Dakota

(Katie is a licensed secondary school counselor in MN with many years of experience at Eagan High School. She is working on her license renewal clock hours.)

Whitewater Learning highlights

1. All of our **content has been pre-approved** by the Minnesota Board of School Administrators and is listed on the Minnesota Department of Education’s website as a recommended source of relicensing content for educators.
2. **Our pricing is strong.** Wherever I am able, I absorb the cost of individuals who can benefit from participating in Whitewater Learning content so that your entire team can benefit from learning the same information.

Group cost:

The cost for a full year group subscriptions is \$60.00 per licensed and licensed-like employees. Licensed-like includes community education and other non-licensed workers who are responsible for planning and teaching lessons and cultural competency workers. **Then with a paid group subscription we will absorb the cost of all non-licensed employees including paraprofessionals, teaching assistants, clerical, food service, buildings and grounds and transportation personnel.** We will also authorize licensed subscribers to use module content for lessons in classrooms and as the content to frame discussions for parent groups led by a licensed subscriber. This last option is great for creating common language and understanding for such topics as mild to moderate autism.

Some benefits:

- Increases the feeling that everyone on staff is an equal member of the team.
 - Your district has the opportunity to create institutional memory of significant concepts to pass along to new hires.
3. There are **77 modules** (mini-courses) current in the Whitewater library including options in all of the six MN required topics for relicensing. That equals more than 280 clock hours. In addition we are currently working on the second edition for two modules and three new topics.
 4. We have tested individual and group subscriptions and have **testimonials** to back my assessment of quality. See a few examples below.
 5. There **are many ways that Whitewater is being used** when purchased as a subscription. And, I can now provide coaching on how to implement Whitewater for group settings. Here are a few:
 - a. Earn clock hours for license renewal.
 - b. Create institutional memory for the continuation of topics introduced each year. (Within our capacity, we will create modules requested by a district.)
 - c. Support Professional Learning Community discussions.
 - d. Content for university credits.
 - e. Take the place of traveling to work weather related and other unexpected school closing days.
 - f. Allows flexibility for staff to complete professional learning content without reporting to a worksite on **specified professional development days**. This is a HUGE hit with educators in the districts that have adopted this practice.
 - i. Staff with small children do not have to figure out how to find day-care.
 - ii. They report that they feel like they are being treated as professionals.
 - iii. Because all of the Whitewater content is stored on the TIES website and are built using Moodle, every subscribing district has access to data that shows who has completed what content and when.
 - iv. With the content “under their caps,” staff can apply it when working with students and in every type of team meeting from then on.
 - g. It is a great tool to provide support as part of the individual performance review

- processes, among other applications.
- h. Just-in-time learning.
 - i. Lessons, such as bullying, to be shared with students under the guidance of an instructor.
 - j. Workshops with parents facilitated by a licensed educator.
6. We have a **partnership with the University of North Dakota** that allows individuals to earn online graduate-level professional development credits that are posted on the student's personal UND transcript. These allow for monetary advancement in most districts but are offered at a lower cost to the student than university credits used in a degree program. The content used in each courses is entirely from the Whitewater Learning library.
 7. This spring we activated the **Whitewater Learning Badging Program**. There are five levels of badges with the fifth level equal to the same number of hours found in a graduate degree. The first level requires 60 hours of Whitewater content and does not require any additional cost beyond the fee for the individual learner's subscription. An individual purchase is \$299.00 for an unlimited full year subscription but groups can purchase the same unlimited one-year subscriptions for only \$60.00 per person for licensed and licensed-like learners with others included at Whitewater's expense. We are in the process of **awarding the Level One Badge to 102 educators**.
 8. Here is a passcode that will allow you and your decision-making team access to the entire Whitewater Learning library.

Website: www.whitewaterlearning.org

Username: democode

Passcode for May: DemocodeHWZ8!

Passcode for June: Democode14TaPEG!

The Username and Passcodes are case sensitive.

Some strategies for implementation

- Identify a lead facilitator at the district level and then facility leaders at each building level to monitor, provide support, and to encourage the participation of each employee until it becomes part of the culture of the school.
- Get everyone started with the tools to be successful. Some of your staff are proficient in the use of computers but there may be a few who are intimidated. Set up a set of dates when individuals meet with their computers with a coach to help them get started. Whitewater modules have a branded layout so every module follows the same format. After completing the first module, users should be self-sufficient.
- Identify reinforcers that individuals want to work toward. For example, to entice non-licensed employees new to participating in professional development, some group subscribers have instituted financial incentives for the completion of modules including the non-licensed groups. This has been extremely effective. Working at home on PD days or snow days can also be a

great incentive for all employees. Completing modules toward a badge, or simply seeing their progress on a chart are also reinforcers.

- Begin the school year by assigning the completion of the Bloodborne Pathogen and Right to Know requirements using one of the two Whitewater options. You could send staff the notice in mid-July with a deadline the second week in September (choose your own date) but let them know that by completing the modules online, they can use the time in their classrooms getting ready for their students that would have been allocated in a group session, or they can leave early to make up the time used outside of their official work setting. I suggest that both the Bloodborne Pathogen module and the Getting Started: How to Use Whitewater Learning modules be assigned and rewarded in this manner. Staff knowing they may leave 2.5 hours early on the day before Labor Day weekend can be VERY reinforcing for those thinking about closing the cabin! As reinforcing for other staff may be having the extra time in their classrooms.
- There are many, many more reinforcers that can be identified and used... but key is we have learned that this, like any other initiative, does not work well without incentives and RECOGNITION.
- On our website there is a link many suggestions on how to successfully implement Whitewater as a group subscription.

Contact

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Biography

Ann Zweber Werner, PhD is a 45-year veteran as an educator in various roles. Upon finishing her bachelor's degree from the College of St. Scholastica she was hired to teach home economics and serve as department chairperson in a large inner city school. After five years, at age 27, she transitioned to school administrator roles and by 32 was a head principal. Her schools ranged in size from 400 to 2800 students. She earned her master's degree at Michigan State University in curriculum and instruction and Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota (UMN) in educational administration. After 26 years as a teacher and secondary school administrator she was hired in 1997 to develop and direct the new Licensing and Leadership Development Program for Educational Administrators at the UMN.

In 2011 she resigned the UMN to found Whitewater Learning® E-Education for Educators. Whitewater produces online professional development for multiple purposes including teacher and administrator license renewal. In addition to her degrees, Dr. Werner is a Bush Fellow, completed the Aubrey Daniels Performance Management training program, MN Principals Academy, served on the founding MN Board of School Administrators, ARTech Charter School Board as member and chairperson, and the MN Home Economics Advisory Council, among other leadership roles.