

## **Workshops for Teachers and Administrators:**

It's important that teachers and administrators keep abreast of the latest research and best practices in education. Educators don't have time to waste and need to have professional development programs that are highly effective, easy to learn, and can be immediately incorporated into the classroom.

***“Improving Student Achievement Through Neuroscience”*** (This workshop may be adjusted to fit the following formats: 5 Days, 3 Days, **1 Day**, or Half Day. Convention format: 1 or **2 hours**) Teachers, as well as students, need to understand how the brain works. Students will improve their learning once they understand how their brain retains information and how the brain learns best. This basic introduction to brain-compatible learning gives teachers the most important concepts to help them improve their teaching methods making their instruction the most effective it can be.

Based on the latest neurological research and best practices, teachers learn Whitaker's *Starfish Strategies*. Teachers spend time studying the most effective strategies to use in their classrooms. These simple to use methods are easy to introduce into any lesson. With this workshop comes numerous examples of each strategy, a Lesson Plan Template and Observation Tools. Teachers will understand how these strategies work hand-in-hand with the new Common Core Standards.

Essential Questions:

- *“Why is it important for teachers to understand the basic physiology and functions of the brain?”*
- *“Why is it important to keep abreast of the latest neurological research and its effect on learning in the classroom?”*
- *“What are the most effective ways to cover Standards and Benchmarks, Common Core Curriculum, and best practices all in one lesson?”*
- *“How do you know that what you taught was actually learned by the students? What form of assessment do you use to verify the effects of your teaching?”*



**“Effective Teaching Strategies”** (This workshop may be adjusted to fit the following formats: 1 Day, or **Half Day**) Once the teachers understand and practice the various Starfish Strategies, each teacher will be asked to tally their various lessons on a weekly basis. First the staff learns the Starfish Strategies and then the technology template is put on the school’s intranet so the teachers can collect data relating to their teaching style. Each teacher will be able to evaluate their own progress. This is a very simple way to collect data needed for action research. The teachers will then explain the Starfish Strategies to their students. (A Microsoft PowerPoint presentation is provided with this workshop.) After reviewing the 27 strategies, students are asked to pick their favorite lesson from the week. Data collected will help the staff to evaluate their usage of the various teaching strategies and adjust their methods to meet the needs of their students.

Essential Questions:

- *“Based on the latest neurological research, list three teaching styles that are the most effective and three that are least effective teaching methods.”*
- *“What teaching style do you use most frequently? Why?”*
- *“Describe a lesson and explain how you could teach it in two different ways...using two different teaching strategies”*



**“Baby Brains”** (This workshop may be adjusted to fit the following formats: 2 Hour or **Half Day/3 Hour**. Conference format: 1 or **2 Hours**) The most important time in a human beings life is from birth to age five. This critical brain development period is greatly influenced by its environment. Developing an enriched environment will optimize learning and healthy brain development. It’s critical for educators to understand the rapid changes going on in the brain. This class is designed for anyone interested in Early Childhood Development.

Essential Questions:

- *“What is happening to a child’s brain from birth to age 5?”*
- *“What can I do to enhance a child’s learning? How should I adjust my teaching styles for optimal results?”*
- *“Why are the ‘Terrible Twos’ so terrible!?”*
- *“Is it true that if I play Mozart will the children be smarter?”*
- *“What are The Windows of Opportunity and why is it so critical for teachers and paraprofessionals to learn about them?”*
- *“What are some good resources I can turn to for additional information on Early Childhood Development?”*



***“Neuroscience in the Classroom”*** (This workshop may be adjusted to fit the following formats: **1 Day** or Half Day. Conference format: 1 or **2 hours**) It’s important for students of all ages to understand how their brains work. But what do you teach them? How do you teach it? Based on the age of the student, teachers will learn what their students need to know...and *how* to teach it. The workshop starts with Early Childhood brain topics and finishes with the Adult Learner. A complete Brain Curriculum is provided with all the resources needed to help explain and demonstrate how the brain functions. Students become better learners once they understand how the brain learns best.

Essential Questions:

- *“Why is it important for students to understand how their brains work?”*
- *“How is learning about the brain going to improve student achievement?”*
- *“How can you teach a very difficult concept, such as “Stress and Brain Function” to kindergartners? Do you think it’s important to do so? Why?”*



***“Cognitive Skills Improvement through the use of BrainWare SAFARI”*** (This workshop may be adjusted to fit the following formats: **1 Day**, or Half Day. Conference format: 1 or 2 Hours.) For the past four years Dr. Whitaker has been working with BrainWare SAFARI, a software program designed to help children improve their cognitive skills. Pope John Paul II Catholic School in Lecanto, FL did a pilot program and had such excellent results that now the school has the program as part of their 3rd grade curriculum. Students enjoy the computerized game format and teachers are pleased with the ease of implementing the program and the research data the company provides. When teachers need to differentiate instruction, the data is at their fingertips. Learn about the program and see how your students can have the same excellent results.

Essential Questions:

- *“What type of improvement can we expect to see in the cognitive development of our students if the school implements the software program, BrainWare Safari, for just 12 weeks?”*
- *“What antidotal research have you found that justifies the use of BrainWare Safari? What do teachers, students and parents think of the program?”*
- *“What would be the benefits of implementing BrainWare Safari into our curriculum?”*

