



FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Kathy Poelker came to Fairbanks and conducted a 2-day inservice for preschool special education teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech/language pathologists. It was one of the most active and enjoyable trainings I have attended in my two decades in education. The information was very useable; attendees loved it because it was something they could implement immediately with students.

We especially appreciated the way that Kathy reminded us that music and movement have multidimensional effects on children. When we listen to music or move our bodies, a multitude of things are happening. Her training included strategies for increasing attention span, addressing kids' kinesthetic needs, activating both sides of the brain, practicing fine motor skills such as pincer grip, improving gross motor skills such as balance, motor planning, and bilateral and cross lateral movement, addressing visual motor coordination, body awareness, and recognition of parts of the body.

Kathy also introduced us to practical enrichment activities to use in the classroom, including a wide variety of student-made materials. It was wonderful to see how her own materials can be used as the basis for writing and art activities as well.

She shared research with us about how physical activities can have powerful cognitive effects. Her sensory-motor exercises help children build neurological pathways and connections. Besides the benefits of stimulating the brain, Kathy's activities make school fun for kids and staff!

Thank you, Kathy, for enriching our classrooms with your materials and activities!

Linae Sanger
Special Education Coordinator
Fairbanks Northstar Borough School District