Rice program energizes mathematics teachers in Aldine

Through courses developed by the Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP), Aldine ISD (AISD) kindergarten – 8th grade mathematics teachers had the opportunity to explore the important concepts of number and operation through a lens of measurement.

The courses, which built on the long-standing collaboration between RUSMP and AISD, were attended by 70 teachers from schools across the district. Three courses (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) were designed to meet the needs of teachers at different grade levels.

Participants attended classes, led by pairs of RUSMP Master Teachers, for seven Thursday evenings in January and February. Using hands-on activities, teachers explored concepts related to measurement, such as perimeter, area, volume, elapsed time, and the Pythagorean Theorem. Through these explorations teachers discovered how to use measurement concepts to deepen student understanding of number operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Teachers received books and activities to assist them in applying what they learned to their own classrooms.

The culminating activity of the courses brought the participants from all grade levels together to engage in a series of estimation workstations. These activities focused on interesting problems such as developing reasonable estimates for the number of items in a jar or estimating the surface area of a person’s body. By collaboratively engaging in the solving of these problems, teachers were able to share different problem-solving strategies and discuss the similarities and differences in instructional techniques at different grade levels.

Teachers responded positively to the courses. One teacher commented, “It allowed me time to focus on alternative strategies to implement in my classroom that I had never been exposed to before.” Another added, “It helped me to help my students learn more.”

Dameta Sklnman, AISD Program Director, Intermediate & Middle Mathematics, summarized the importance of the courses to Aldine ISD stating, “The RUSMP courses provided our teachers with engaging activities that promote our continued focus on rigorous mathematics instruction for our students.”