

BETHUNE INSTITUTE OF ROBUST TEACHING

Here's everything you need to know
about the Bethune Institute of Robust
Teaching (BIRT)

Educator Informational Packet

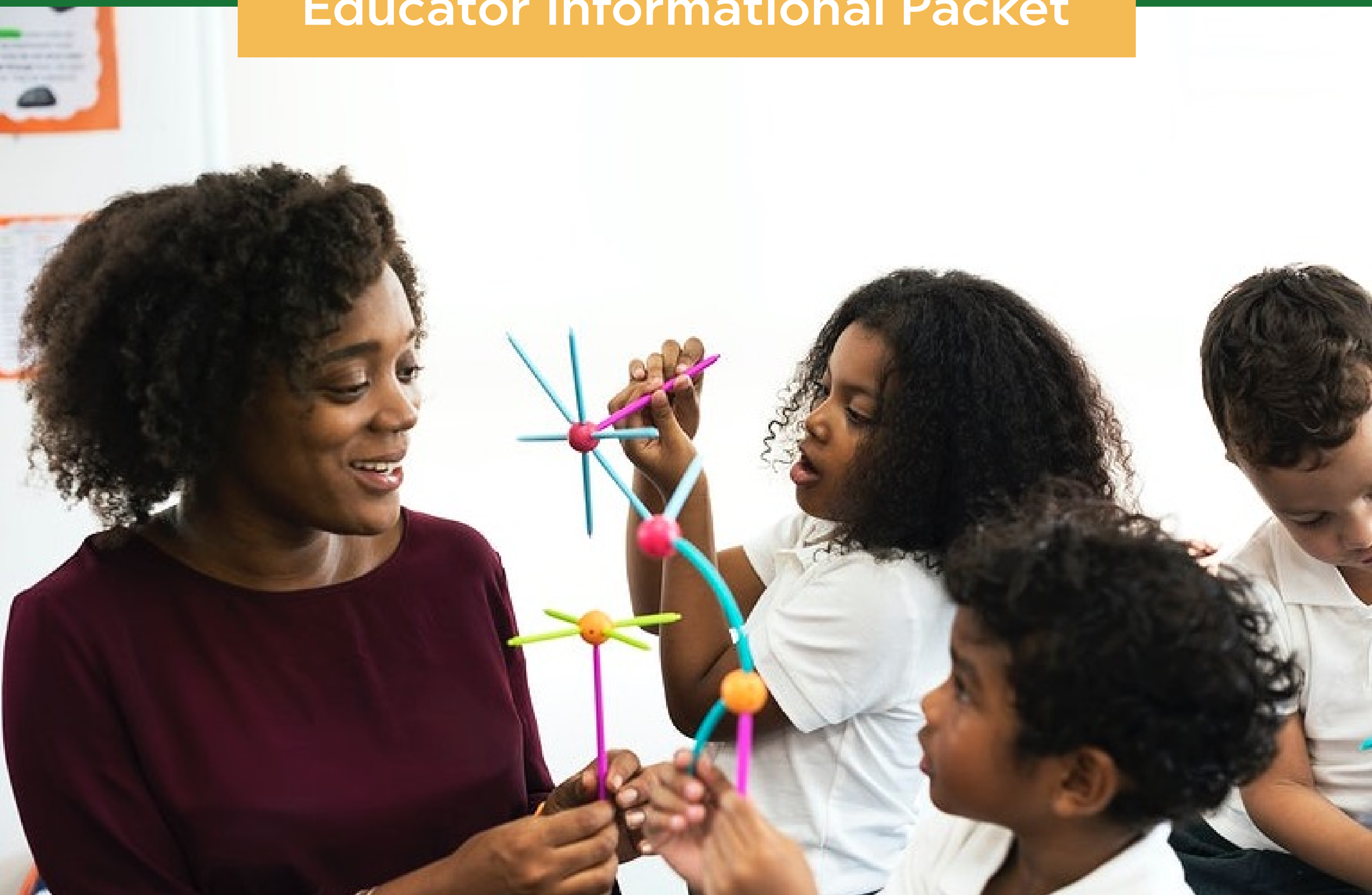


TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Program	2
Program Rationale	4
Training Model	7
Professional Development	11
Recruitment	16
About The Institute of Positive Education	19



A woman with long dark hair is leaning over a desk, pointing at a laptop screen. A young child with curly hair is sitting at the desk, looking at the screen. The image is covered with a semi-transparent green overlay.

THE PROGRAM

What is the Bethune Institute of
Robust Teaching?

Educator Informational Packet

THE PROGRAM

What is the Bethune Institute of Robust Teaching?

WE'RE EXCITED TO ELEVATE YOUR TEACHING STRATEGIES

The evolving specialization as teachers move across the grade levels is based on the increased content area demands beyond primary school. Unless they have secured specialized certifications, elementary teachers typically have not had the level of training in each content area that newer academic standards require.

Professional development in social studies and science will include a focus on the specialized demands of reading, vocabulary and writing in these disciplines. Current national standards in both science and social studies call for attention to teaching children to read the specialized texts in these disciplines and to compose arguments, written and oral, that build on the demands of reasoning in these disciplines.

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PROGRAM RATIONALE

How can the Bethune Institute of
Robust Teaching help?

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How can the Bethune Institute of Robust Teaching help?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Teaching is a complex enterprise, requiring deep knowledge of subject matter, understanding what makes learning particular content difficult for novices, understanding the social and emotional needs of students and how these shift across age ranges. The expectations for learning today are very rigorous, in large part because the demands of participation in the workforce projected for today's youth are and will require deep knowledge and dispositions to continue to learn across the life course. In addition, participation in civic life today and projected for young people currently in our K-12 schooling require a disposition to wrestle with complexity.



PROGRAM RATIONALE

How can the Bethune Institute of Robust Teaching help?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Teachers face unprecedented tasks in working to address the joint challenges of likely academic loss along with social and emotional challenges for children. The Institute of Positive Education (IPE) would like to introduce the Bethune Institute for Robust Teaching (The Institute) in July 2021. BIRT will work with teachers in Chicago, a district that is majority black and brown students and students living in poverty.

Learning to teach in masterful ways is complex, multifaceted and life-long. The Institute will focus on expanding teachers' content knowledge in the areas of literacy, mathematics, social studies, and science, including the pedagogical implications of such content knowledge as well as the demands of addressing children's developmental needs in tandem.

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A person wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and glasses is leaning over a table. They are pointing with their right index finger at a document on the table. Their left hand is also on the table, with fingers spread. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a modern office or meeting space with large windows.

TRAINING MODEL

How was this training developed
for our communities?

TRAINING MODEL

How was this training developed for our communities?

CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR STUDENT LEARNING

This model is unique because it situates student learning as deeply influenced by cultural practices, both the routine cultural practices within classrooms as well as their cultural experiences outside of school in family and community.

The model supports teachers in understanding the cultural underpinnings of the wholistic development of children, and how these cultural underpinnings influence engagement, motivation and a sense of self-efficacy.



TRAINING MODEL

How was this training developed for our communities?

CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR STUDENT LEARNING

+ Relevance of tasks involves using knowledge to wrestle with problems children experience and understanding they have relevant prior knowledge and experience to bring to such tasks.

+ A sense of safety involves building trusting relationships where children know the environment, including the teacher, provide safety nets for failure and where children experience supports for carrying out difficult problem-solving tasks.

+ Children experience self-efficacy when problem solving is made explicit and they experience supports for both successes and failures.



TRAINING MODEL

How was this training developed for our communities?





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

What sectors of Professional
Development are covered?

PROFESSIONAL DEV.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

+ In literacy, professional development will include decoding in the early grades and across grades reading comprehension, vocabulary and academic language, and composition within a special focus on reading in the content areas in middle upper cycle grades.

+ In mathematics, PD will focus on learning progressions, that is how broad concepts are related within grade clusters (e.g. how broad understandings of proportional reasoning unfold in concepts and operations around fractions, percentages, ratios, exponents), what is entailed in teachers understanding and building on student errors as opportunities, what is entailed in teachers understanding multiple mathematical pathways through which problems can be solved in order to move beyond simply teaching single procedures.

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PROFESSIONAL DEV.

What sectors of Professional Development are covered?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

+ In social studies, PD will focus on teaching concepts about historical, civic, economic, political and social functioning, rather than simply teaching facts, helping students to comprehend and interrogate primary and secondary sources for perspective and bias so that instruction moves beyond textbooks alone; and to better understand the diversity of human cultures contributing to the evolution of nations and the role of geography in influencing human communities.

+ In science, teachers will learn to implement the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in ways that are responsive to the students they teach. The NGSS call for the integration of content knowledge in the three broad sub-disciplines of science (physical, life and earth sciences), engagement with the practices of sciences, and interrogation of concepts that apply across the sub-disciplines.

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PROFESSIONAL DEV.

What sectors of Professional Development are covered?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

+ These practices include modeling, developing explanations and arguing about evidence. Cross cutting concepts include understanding patterns, cause and effect, quantification of data, understanding systems and models, cycles of energy and matter, stability and change, and structure and function.

+ It is the integration of these practices and cross cutting concepts within each sub-discipline of science that is the challenge for teaching. We will ask school based cohorts of teachers to identify the science curriculum they are currently using and use that as a differentiated basis for small group work.



PROFESSIONAL DEV.

What sectors of Professional Development are covered?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

+ We will build the work teachers do by drawing on the range of resources available from the National Research Council and other entities (e.g., WestEd) to support the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards. Two unique features of our proposed focus on NGSS will include support for reading in science and for the design of culturally relevant investigative tasks, and attention to how to support students' healthy social-emotional well-being by supports for self-efficacy and relevance.





RECRUITMENT

How can educators join this
training cohort?

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT

How can educators join this training cohort?

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

The Institute will host a 4-week summer Institute beginning Summer 2021. The Institute will run 4 hours a day for 4 weeks. We will accommodate 10 teachers per grade level cluster. Schools can elect to send teaching assistants as well. TA counts can double participating staff by school cohort. The expectation is that teachers and teaching assistants who will be working together in the upcoming school year can participate, based on decisions by participating schools. Teaching assistants are often expected to carry out small group and individualized instruction. Thus, including them paired with the teachers with whom they will be working increases the capacity of the teaching team. The expectation is that K-1 teachers will focus on reading and mathematics; grade 2-3 teachers will specialize either in reading or mathematics; grade 4-5 teachers will focus on either reading and social studies or math and science; grade 6-8 teachers will focus on one content area – reading and composing in the disciplines; social studies; mathematics; science.

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EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT

How can educators join this training cohort?

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

The Institute will recruit based on a cohort model, meaning we will recruit cohorts of teachers from schools, rather than simply recruiting individual teachers. We will recruit cohorts from schools where schools can decide on grade level clusters – e.g., primary (K-3), middle school (grades 4-5), upper cycle (grades 6-8).

We will actively target and recruit elementary schools specifically on the southside of the city (based on the Institute taking place at the IPE headquarters at 78th and Ellis) whose test score data suggest this kind of support would be particularly useful. Included will be, Chicago Public Schools, charter schools in Chicago authorized by the Illinois State Board of Education, and Catholic Archdiocese schools.

Participating schools will have to agree to send a grade cluster cohort and have a plan for continuing the focus of the summer professional development into the new school year.

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The background of the entire page is a green-tinted photograph showing several hands of different skin tones reaching up and holding a globe. The hands are positioned in a way that suggests a collective effort or support. The text is overlaid on this image.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF POSITIVE EDUCATION

How was the training created?

ABOUT IPE

How was the training created?

THE INSTITUTE OF POSITIVE EDUCATION

The Institute of Positive Education (IPE) is particularly well situated to design and implement this Institute. In 1990, IPE founded the Bethune Teacher Institute, named after Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Bethune-Cookman College, and a courageous advocate for organizing educational opportunities for African-Americans during the Jim Crow era.

In its founding, the Bethune Teacher Institute was funded by the MacArthur Foundation. In addition, IPE is the founder of New Concept School, established in 1972, running an early childhood and elementary school until 1998. In 1998, several IPE founders along with other civic leaders and education scholars established the Betty Shabazz International Charter school network. IPE continued its early childhood, out-of-school programs for K-8th grades; summer academic and enrichment program; lecture series; and educational and community programs for adults, families and educators.

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CONTACT US

We'd love to hear from you!

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