



# Creating Inclusive Math Classrooms in Rural Settings: Strategies for Belonging and Engagement

## Course Syllabus

### Course Description

In this class, you will learn how to foster a culture of belonging and inclusion in your rural math classroom. Discover strategies that encourage all students, including those from historically marginalized groups, to feel safe enough to actively participate and share their mathematical thinking. This class goes beyond traditional methods, providing insights into safeguarding and affirming positive math identities and an often-absent sense of belonging among your native, immigrant, special education, and LGBTQ+ students. Drawing on strategies of restorative practices, you will learn how to respond to discriminatory student comments in ways that build relationships, reduce shame, and restore dignity to all your math learners, while still maintaining the focus on your daily math learning goal. This class is perfect for teachers in classrooms with multi-age learners and diverse math levels, and will also examine low-prep differentiation and discourse strategies that incorporate student voice and choice.

### Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify the unique challenges and opportunities of teaching math in rural settings and analyze the impact of rural culture, socioeconomic factors, and community dynamics on math learning.
2. Develop strategies to create a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students, considering their unique backgrounds and identities.
3. Implement strategies to validate and celebrate diverse mathematical strengths and experiences among students, attending to issues of individual and group identity.
4. Demonstrate techniques for responding to discriminatory comments in a constructive and restorative manner.
5. Implement low-prep differentiation strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of students in a rural math classroom and facilitate meaningful math discourse that incorporates student voice and choice.
6. Understand the principles of restorative practices and their application in the context of math education.
7. Design instructional strategies that accommodate multi-age learners in a rural math classroom and foster collaboration and peer support among students with varying math levels.



8. Reflect on personal beliefs and practices to promote inclusivity in math education, and understand the need for ongoing professional growth and refinement of inclusive teaching strategies.

### **Modules**

- Module 1: Understanding the Context of Rural Math Education, Quiz 1
- Module 2: Cultivating a Culture of Belonging, Quiz 2
- Module 3: Affirming Positive Math Identities, Quiz 3
- Module 4: Responding to Discriminatory Comments, Quiz 4
- Module 5: Differentiation and Discourse Strategies, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Leveraging Restorative Practices, Quiz 6
- Module 7: Engaging Multi-Age Learners, Quiz 7
- Module 8: Reflecting and Refining Inclusive Practices, Quiz 8

### **Grading:**

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (retakes allowed).

### **Format**

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course.