

MATHEMATICS & ECONOMICS

CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE



National Council on Economic Education

▶ GRADES 3-5

GRADES 6-8

GRADES 9-12

Part 2: Organizing the Workshop

Recruiting Strategies

Your target audience is grades 3-5 elementary teachers, elementary school principals and elementary curriculum supervisors. Visit with the math supervisor(s) for the school district(s) where the workshop will be held. Most school districts host mandatory professional workshops during the school year that are organized by these district math supervisors. Make an appointment with the district math supervisors to present them with a copy of MECL and ask to be a part of the existing curriculum-day program. This will make your recruiting easier since the school district will direct teachers to you. You might offer to do a series of workshops in a school district in a one-hour after-school format if the curriculum day is filled. Suggest that neighboring schools come together for training at a central location. Math supervisors are the best avenue for finding a good fit for the teacher audience since they know the curriculum well and are very aware of the assessment strengths of the district. Helping them see that MECL will help students practice math skills and improve economics instruction should be an easy sell.

Another idea is to ask a school principal to host a workshop for all the grades 3-5 teachers in one building. This would be especially effective in large school buildings where you might find 3-4 teachers per grade level as well as gifted or remedial staff. Offer to serve refreshments and give an overview of MECL and demonstrate one or two lessons.

Council and Center Web sites and school district professional development offices can also post information about your workshop.

Make sure you have done your homework. Taking the time to find out about the district or school math curriculum before planning each workshop will make your efforts more targeted and helpful to teachers. Showing teachers the good “match” with the school or district math outcomes will help you connect better with the audience. Making a principal or math supervisor your partner in hosting the workshop might better insure that the teachers attend and use the materials.

Also consider meeting with administrators of after-school programs that target academics such as Girls Inc. and Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as tutoring programs in school districts.

Finally, talk to the math education department at your host university’s college of education to plan to introduce the materials to pre-service teachers who are in math education classes. Exposing teachers early on the connections between math and economics will pay off, and these teachers will take the knowledge with them into their new school assignments.

Selecting a Location and Date for the Workshop

After you have selected the audience, you should select the date and secure a location at least three months in advance. The farther in advance you make arrangements, the smoother the workshop will go.

If you are working with a single school, you can select a date that most teachers will be available. If you are recruiting from several schools or districts, selecting the date can be more difficult.

Attendance will be better when teachers do not have to switch locations after the school day. An after-school session with light refreshments can be successful with elementary teachers because they can often arrange to stay a bit longer at school rather than drive to another location in the evening.

It is important that you choose a location for your workshop that has the following features:

- ✓ Room for teachers to work in groups at desks or tables
- ✓ Good IT support, ideally with Internet access to the MECL Web site
- ✓ Locations for display of Center/Council materials
- ✓ Area for refreshments
- ✓ Adequate parking for teachers attending

If possible, visit the workshop site ahead of time to try out the Internet connections. School-district filters can sometimes surprise presenters by blocking access. Work with the building IT personnel to make sure you can eliminate problems.

Creating a Promotional Flier

After you have selected the target audience, date and location for the workshop, you must prepare a promotional flier to send to teachers. Include a mail-back return registration form, or have teachers register by email. Fliers sent directly to teachers with their names on them to be placed in mailboxes or passed out by grade-level leaders are the most effective. Districts will often agree to deliver fliers for workshops by the internal school mail process, but don't assume this will be true. If you do use this process, make sure that you visit the school mail room in person and talk to the person who handles the school's bulk mail. It pays to make sure you are bundling the fliers in the proper way and have the approval of the correct departments.

Review the flier to make sure you have included the following basic information:

- ✓ Title of workshop
- ✓ Targeted groups
- ✓ Date, location and times
- ✓ Registration procedures, mail-in form, contact information, deadline
- ✓ Names of cosponsors (for NCEE-funded workshops, include NCEE and 3M Foundation as cosponsors)
- ✓ Fee, if any, or rewards for attending (e.g., copy of MECL, sample lessons, continuing education credits)

Have someone who is not connected to the workshop review the flier before you distribute them to make sure you have included all the pertinent information and that the registration procedure is easy to follow.

"[Click here and enter Name of sponsoring organization]"
 the National Council on Economic Education and
 the 3M Foundation

Present

**Mathematics and Economics:
 Connections for Life, Grades 3-5**

A Half-Day Workshop for Elementary Teachers

DATE:	"[Click here and enter day and date]"
TIME:	"[Click here and enter starting and ending times]"
LOCATION:	"[Click here and enter Building name and room number]" "[Click here and enter address]"

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS	
"[Charge or No Charge]"	FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: "[Contact person's name]" "[phone number, fax number]" "[email address]"
Curriculum Provided	
Breakfast/Lunch/Snacks Provided	
Hands-on Lesson Demonstrations	
In-service Points/Credit Available	

To register for the **Mathematics and Economics, Grades 3-5** workshop, fill out the form below and send to "[Click here and enter contact person's name]"
 At "[Click here and enter sponsoring organization's name]" ,
 "[Click here and enter address]" , "[Click here and enter phone number]" ,
 "[Click here and enter fax number]" ,
 "[Click here and enter email address]"

Space Is Limited--Enroll Today! Registration Due by

"[Click here enter registration deadline]"

Name:					
School:					
Address:					
School Phone:		Home Phone:		Email:	

Checklist for Workshop Planning

Before the workshop

If you have not conducted a workshop for elementary teachers before, there are some expectations that you should consider that may be different from workshops for high school teachers.

Elementary teachers will expect to have the lessons previewed fully or demonstrated at the workshop. Review MECL and find two lessons you like. Review them thoroughly before you demonstrate “live” for teachers. It is very important that you feel comfortable with the lessons and know what you are doing. A “dry run” with a colleague or elementary teachers you know can be helpful. If you are uncomfortable doing these hand-on activities, it might be wise to hire an elementary teacher to help you with the demonstration part of the workshop. Teachers are more likely to use materials in the classroom if they have tried them at a workshop.

To demonstrate lessons and prepare teachers to use them, a workshop of 30 teachers is a very appropriate size. When there are more than 30 teachers trying to participate, it slows down the activity. If you are hosting over 30 teachers, break the workshop into two sessions.

For each lesson you demonstrate, have all the equipment and materials needed to do the lessons with you. If you do not have scissors, rulers, markers, glue sticks, etc., you should collect or borrow them ahead of time to take with you. If you are hosting the workshop at a school building, you could arrange to borrow the needed equipment from a teacher ahead of time. Offer this teacher a small gift, MECL or payment in compensation.

If you are not giving the participants a copy of MECL at the workshop, give them a table of the lesson summaries and a copy of one sample lesson. If you don't have a grant to buy a copy of MECL for all the participants, consider asking the school principal, the district curriculum supervisor or a local donor to fund at least one MECL per building. Approach a local bank or financial firm to sponsor teachers by buying copies of MECL for them.

Literature and trade books that can be used with the lessons are listed on the MECL Web site. Because reading and math are so closely tied in grades 3-5, the literature connections will be very helpful to teachers. Make sure to gather several of the books that go with the lesson(s) you are demonstrating at the workshop. You might develop a bibliography of all the books in MECL or give a companion book away as a door prize.

The week of the workshop

Be sure to consider these details the week of the workshop:

- Have you sent confirmation letters or emails to everyone who has registered for the workshop?
- Have you thought through all the logistics of check-in, refreshments and room arrangements?

- Have you prepared the handouts and collected the supplies and materials you will need to demonstrate the lessons?
- Have you made nametags and prepared an evaluation form?
- Have you arranged for IT support and also prepared for the worst by making transparencies of key visuals and other items in case of bad Internet connections?
- Do you have a way to collect information such as email addresses so that you can contact the participants later?
- Are you planning to include the cosponsors in the workshop and, if so, how?

After the workshop

Send thank-you letters to co-hosts, district or school personnel who helped you and donors. Include sample comments or copies of the evaluations. Complete all the reports for Center, Council or NCEE follow-up.

Send an email thank you to the teachers who attended and remind them to call or email if they have questions or problems with the MECL lessons.

If you find additional literature books to use with the lessons, send information on them to John LeFeber at jlefeber@ncee.net to add to the Web site. Encourage teachers to write additional lessons for *EconEdLink* (<http://www.econedlink.org>) by referring them to the NCEE Web site (<http://www.ncee.net>) or John LeFeber.

Describe the workshop you have just conducted, and/or send copies of the evaluations to the math supervisors of neighboring districts. Ask if they would like to host a workshop soon in their district. Knowing another school has had a successful program will encourage others to use the MECL guide.

After several weeks contact the workshop participants by email again and ask if they have used MECL lessons in class. Their testimonials might be used in future brochures or advertising. You might also find another willing “star” teacher to help you put on a workshop in the future.

How to Use MECL to Differentiate Instruction

If you have the opportunity to work with a university math educator or district math supervisor on this workshop, the ideal role for this person would be to have him or her demonstrate how to use MECL to strengthen all levels of math instruction. MECL offers challenging activities for students who are above grade level and offers easier lessons for review and practice of math skills. In both cases, the lessons offer new instruction in economics concepts.

The lessons that fit with a district or grade-level outcome will be time-consuming for Center and Council staff to select and learn because they will be different with each district or school building. To save time and help the teachers in your workshop, enlist the help of someone who knows the school math curriculum very well to make these important connections. Meet with this person several weeks before the workshop and discuss his or her possible role in presenting the math connections. Make sure to take an extra copy of the guide along to give them so they can be well prepared. Offer to duplicate any handouts on differentiated instruction or ability grouping they might want to offer to the teachers.

Alternatively, enlist the workshop participants to assist with selecting lessons that might work best with their grade. Have them discuss in small groups by grade level as part of the workshop. Give them time to review lessons and select one or two for each grade. By using workshop time to form a plan for using the MECL lessons across grade levels, teachers can see the strength of the curriculum in their school.

Demonstrating the Cross-Curricular Connections

Especially during the half-day workshops, you will want devote some time for teachers to talk about where they might use these lessons other than during math instructional time. All of the MECL lessons ask students to apply their math skills in learning economics concepts.

Language-arts activities are also very much a part of most of the lessons. Students will use speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the activities. Call this to the attention of the workshop participants to encourage them to use the lessons in the language-arts curriculum since they accomplish multiple purposes. Each lesson has three or four literature books that can be read to students or that students themselves can read so that the connections between economics and children's literature can be strengthened. Plan to take some of the literature books listed on the Web site to the workshop and explain how they can be used.

Ask for discussion about other ways teachers can use these lessons in other subjects such as social studies, art, music and science. Teachers can talk in small groups or offer suggestions at the end of your demonstration. Give small prizes/candy to small groups who report to the entire workshop group. Appoint a recorder and offer to compile the suggestions and email them to all the workshop participants.