

# THE SCHOOLS ATTUNED® COURSE

## 2008 PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY REPORT

GENERATED BY ALL KINDS OF MINDS®  
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION  
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**All Kinds of Minds®**

A NON-PROFIT INSTITUTE FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING

## BACKGROUND

The Schools Attuned Program is a professional development program designed to improve educators' ability to help students with differences in learning find success in school. The specific goals of the program are to (1) support educators in developing and demonstrating expertise regarding differences in learning, (2) strengthen educators' understanding of students' strengths and interests and value how those strengths and interests can serve as pathways to school success, (3) provide educators with clear, specific, actionable strategies to manage differences in learning, and (4) provide school faculty with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to enact changes in policy, practices, and culture that address learning variation in the school.

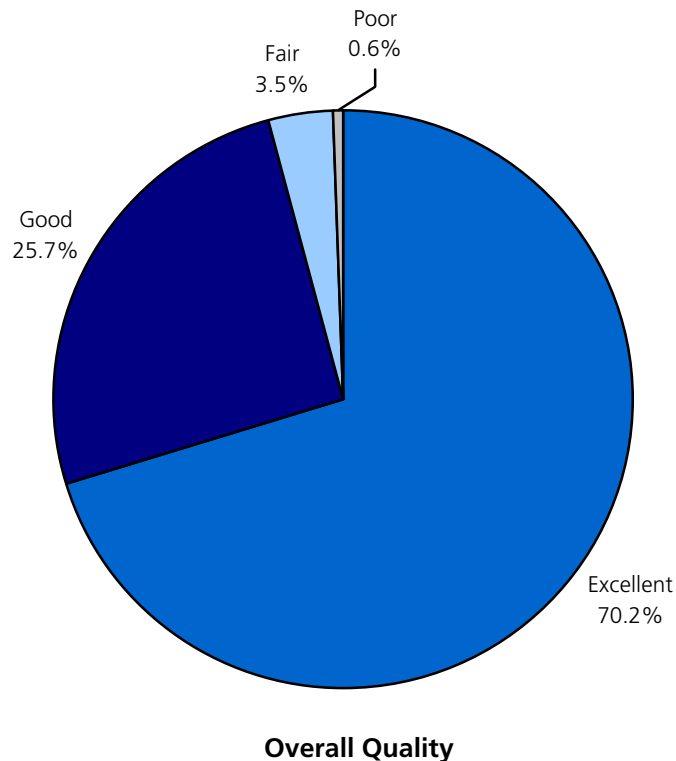
The Schools Attuned Program provides a minimum of 35 hours of core instruction (Course) and 10 hours for follow-up experiences (Schools Attuned in Practice). The Program contains the following elements: (1) Developing Minds Video Library, (2) readings from books and articles by Dr. Levine and others, (3) small group work to provide for active assimilation of content and practice of skills, (4) case studies/vignettes to help participants understand the constructs, (5) demonstration and practice sessions to provide opportunities to use complex information and processes simultaneously and fluidly, (6) preparation for implementing the Schools Attuned Program in the school setting, including management strategies, and (7) On-Site and E-Learning modules offered during the school year to help support implementation of the Schools Attuned Program. Participants register for one of two "paths", Generalist or Subject Specialist. Each path is designed to address participants' areas of interest and expertise based on the grade levels and/or subject areas they teach. Elementary or middle school educators focusing on multiple subject areas typically enroll in the Generalist Path. Middle or high school educators focusing on one or two subject areas typically enroll in the Subject Specialist Path. Educators who share characteristics of both paths, such as an elementary school Art teacher, have the option of enrolling in either path.

All Kinds of Minds uses evaluation of the Schools Attuned Program to continuously improve its impact upon educators and the students they serve. Feedback from Schools Attuned participants provides documentation of educators' reactions to the Course and its facilitators. Through the Course survey, participants assess the new knowledge and skills they have gained, as well as how their beliefs have changed as a result of participating in the Course. To read more about the research and evaluation behind our programs, visit the All Kinds of Minds web site at [WWW.ALLKINDSOFMINDS.ORG](http://WWW.ALLKINDSOFMINDS.ORG).

This summary report presents program evaluation results for the Schools Attuned Courses that occurred in sites across the United States, Canada, and Switzerland between April 2008 and June 2009. Analyses are based on information from the Schools Attuned Course Participant Survey, an online survey available to participants through the Schools Attuned website following the last session of the Course. In 2008, a total of 2,065 participants completed program evaluation surveys following 184 Course events: 75% of participants through the Generalist Path, and 25% through the Subject Specialist Path. Survey results are presented in the following sections.

## OVERALL COURSE QUALITY RATINGS

The majority of participants rated the overall value of the Course as good or excellent. In 2008, almost 96 percent of participants rated the overall quality of the Course as good or excellent. These results are consistent with participant ratings of course quality in 2007, when 96 percent of participants rated the overall value of the Course as good or excellent.



**"Of all the courses I have taken in my 13 years of teaching, I felt this was the most interesting, useful, and had the potential to make the biggest impact on my students. Its overall value is immense."**

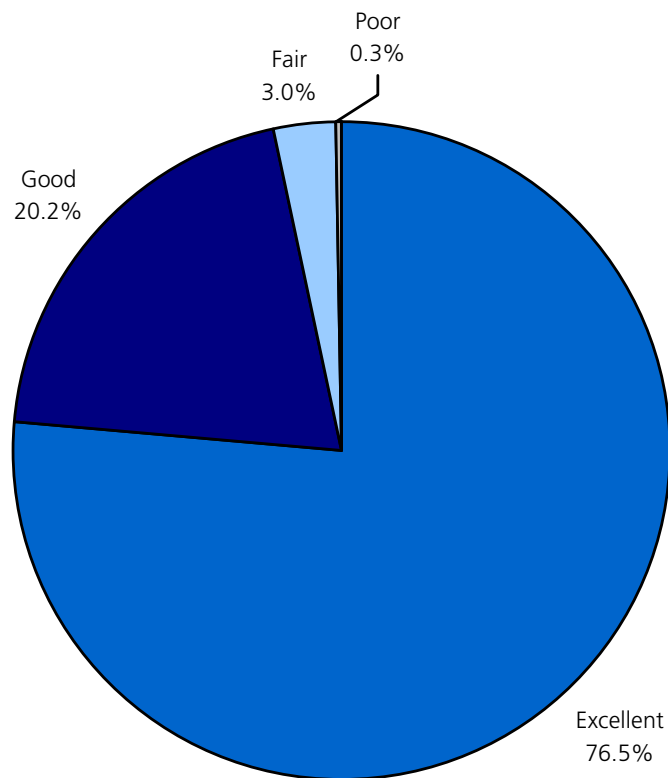
**"My thinking has been challenged all week. This course is just what I have been looking for. I loved it."**

-2008 Schools Attuned Participants

## RATINGS OF FACILITATOR SKILL

Key to the success of the Schools Attuned Program is the quality of the facilitators. Facilitators must possess a strong knowledge base about the content, have experience implementing the Schools Attuned Program, and exhibit high level facilitation skills.

When asked to rate the skill of course facilitation, participants provided positive responses. In 2008, more than 96 percent of participants rated the overall facilitation quality as good or excellent. These results are consistent with participant ratings of facilitation quality in 2007, when 96 percent of participants rated the overall facilitation quality of the Course as good or excellent.



Overall Facilitator Skill

**“The facilitators were excellent in their delivery of the program, providing informed anecdotes, and applying elements of the course which simulated how safe and productive an ‘attuned’ learning environment could be.”**

-2008 Schools Attuned Participant

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### Knowledge Gained Through the Course

Participants rated the *knowledge* they gained by participating in the Course. More than 98 percent of participants agreed that the Course supported their ability to understand and use each of the Schools Attuned concepts listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

<b>This Course has provided me with an understanding of...</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
The range of differences in learning and why some students struggle with learning.	69.1	30.0	.7	0.2
Developing and refining hypotheses about student learning based on Neurodevelopmental (ND) observations/information.	60.1	38.4	1.3	0.2
How student profiles are made up of ND strengths and weaknesses.	65.3	33.4	1.2	0.1
How student profiles and affinities are linked to learning and motivation.	62.3	36.1	1.5	0.1

### Beliefs Impacted by the Course

Participants rated how their *thinking* was impacted by the Course. More than 97 percent of participants agreed that by participating in the Course, they experienced an increase in the beliefs listed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**

<b>This Course has increased my belief that...</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Students with learning challenges can succeed.	69.7	28.1	1.8	0.4
I can take steps to improve the performance of students with learning differences.	71.8	26.3	1.6	0.2
Leveraging the strengths and affinities of students with learning challenges is as important as the remediation of weaknesses.	72.1	25.9	1.8	0.2

## Skills Developed in the Course

Participants rated the *skills* that the Course provided them. More than 96 percent of participants agreed that the Course helped them develop the skills listed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

<b>This Course has provided me with skills to...</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (%)</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (%)</b>
Examine and describe specific student learning behaviors using the neurodevelopmental (ND) framework.	52.4	45.8	1.6	0.2
Develop and refine hypotheses about student learning based on ND observations/information.	47.2	50.3	2.3	0.1
Begin to identify and address the special learning needs of students.	58.6	39.4	1.8	0.2
Begin engaging students in opportunities for them to strengthen and leverage their strengths and affinities.	54.8	43.2	2.0	0.0
Use the ND approach to collaborate with colleagues around student learning.	50.9	45.8	3.2	0.1
Identify the ND demands of my curriculum and instruction.	47.1	49.9	2.8	0.2
Begin to base instructional decisions on a ND understanding of both curriculum and students' performance.	50.4	46.5	3.0	0.1
Begin to talk with students about their ND strengths and weaknesses and how they affect school performance.	54.2	42.5	3.1	0.2
Identify accommodations and interventions for students in my classroom.	55.7	41.9	2.2	0.2

**"I have been in the field of learning differences for 35 years; I feel Schools Attuned has given me the knowledge to go more in depth when studying a student's learning profile as decisions are made regarding both strengths and weaknesses."**

**"The experience was great and I am glad to know that there is finally a tool that teachers may use to effectively meet the students' needs. "**

-2008 Schools Attuned Participants

## **ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT COMMENTS**

Participants were asked to provide additional comments on numerous aspects of the Schools Attuned Course. Comments were analyzed for content, and several themes emerged, including the quality and value of the Course, the impact of the Course on professional practice, participant feedback about the way the Course was facilitated, and participant interest in opportunities to network with other Schools Attuned educators. A sampling of participant comments, illustrative of these particular themes, is presented below:

### **Quality and Value of the Course**

"This was perhaps the most invaluable course I have ever taken...wish I had known all this during my very early years of teaching."

"This course was very valuable for me and it left me with a very different way of thinking about the kids and me."

"Schools Attuned is easily the most substantive, practical and worthwhile professional opportunity I have participated in during my 15 year career. Schools Attuned offers an educator an amazing amount of practical resources."

"Instructors were excellent and quality materials were provided. One of the very best staff development courses I have ever attended."

"The Course is an excellent opportunity to learn more about teaching and learning at a deeper human level. The materials are very helpful and practical."

"While there was a lot to take in, it was an incredibly valuable week."

"I think the information will be very valuable in helping my students be successful at school."

"So much of this information forces teachers to examine more closely the students' abilities in order to discover their breakdown in learning. This to me should be a skill for every teacher and is truly a benefit of the course."

## **Impact of the Course on Professional Practice**

"Course was an excellent opportunity to reframe and refresh my own skills and knowledge."

"I really enjoyed this course. The content is something that I can use in my classroom."

"I am looking forward to implementing the Attuned constructs, etc. into my daily observation of my students and lesson planning."

"I am now able to look at the construct, function, and component of the neurodevelopmental areas and better evaluate a student's strength or weakness. I also realize the value of strengthening strengths and not focusing only on weaknesses."

"The course provided me with another way of looking at students who are experiencing difficulties, provided me with a new vocabulary and gave me practice in talking through the information with other professionals."

"I have immediately changed my planning and it all seemed to go smoothly and took less time! I changed my planning by having activities listed under receptive and expressive language."

"What an eye opener....I am looking forward to a change in communication with colleagues, administration, and support staff. I no longer want to hear he/she has a reading disability...I want to know the specific weaknesses."

"I have been able to utilize the interventions learned with my entire class. I have many children with a variety of problems. Group intervention has been wonderful for me in helping many of them."

## **Course Facilitation**

“At all times, both facilitators made all tasks meaningful, easy to follow and were thoughtfully prepared.”

“It was obvious that the course was well planned. Our facilitators were excellent facilitators that allowed attendees to participate in a risk-free and stress-free environment.”

“The objectives were clearly defined. The facilitators were wonderful...very well planned with a variety of activities to enhance learning.”

“The facilitators were knowledgeable, patient, and responsive to our comments – both verbally in class and through adjustments to delivery methods of the material. They knew the course information in depth and how teachers and schools could best apply it.”

“The facilitators for my training session were dynamic, engaging, and had a sense of humor. They kept the course upbeat and moving.”

All Kinds of Minds uses the results included in this report to inform subsequent Schools Attuned Course development, guide Schools Attuned in Practice sessions, and enhance the professional development of facilitators. In this way, the Schools Attuned Program functions as a professional development program shaped by practicing educators who implement its philosophy and methods.