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CAMBRIDGE, MA– “Talk is an essential part of science that must happen in classrooms if students are to fully understand what science is about and deepen their scientific ideas,” says Sue Doubler, Principal Investigator of *Talk Science!*, a new professional development program exploring the role of productive talk in the elementary science classroom. Research shows that although there is no absence of talk in the science classroom, much of the talk is not “academically productive,”— that is, it does not lead to greater learning. The project aims to develop materials and approaches that help teachers lead more productive classroom discussions that focus on conceptual understanding to engage students in the process of scientific investigation and explanation. The project is collaborating with scientists and cognitive psychologists at Tufts University and Clark University, as well as with educators at the Mason School in Boston, the Banneker School in Cambridge, MA, and schools in Newton, MA and Vermont.

Project staff will work with teachers, scientists, and cognitive psychologists to create and pilot test video cases and other web resources designed to help teachers establish norms and develop strategies for supporting productive discourse. These video resources will be aligned with the Gr. 3-5 Inquiry Curriculum already developed at TERC and will be available for teachers to use through the Web.

The research component of this project will examine the effects of the *Talk Science!* professional development on teaching, teacher understanding of science, and classroom culture. Schools in Cambridge, Newton and Vermont will participate in this research. Though the project is focused specifically on science learning, it is anticipated that results of the project could have implications for all areas of the curriculum.