

Collaboration Day Reports – April 29, 2015

Elementary Collaboration

Elementary Classroom teachers, Title 1/LAP teachers and PE teachers met at Franklin Elementary School, gathering in the commons initially to discuss the plan for the afternoon. In addition to collaborative work already in progress the groups were given three tasks:

1. Grade level teams to discuss current drafts of the new, mandated K-2 Reading Strategies form to accompany the end of year report card and the report card itself. Teachers were asked to forward questions and suggest possible changes to those documents which are specific to grade levels.
2. All were asked to suggest offerings, including both topics they would like to either teach themselves and those they would like to see offered (learn more about) during our Learning Improvement Days scheduled for the 2015-16 school year.
3. Grade level and specialist teams were asked to prepare a short summary of their district level collaborative work during the school year to be presented when the group gathered again at 3:00 p.m.

The group broke into grade level and specialist teams at that point. Specialists worked at locations as follows:

- At FES, Title 1/LAP teachers were asked to develop proposals for summer school offerings to be implemented at the three elementary schools.
- Elementary PE met at Franklin, discussion including the incorporation of math and reading into physical education activities and refinement of program offerings that were put into place this year through their collaborative efforts.
- Elementary library staff met and continued work on updating catalog records to reflect award winning books so when patrons search for these types of resources the records in the online catalog will be accurate. This project will increase the ability for patrons to search for award winning books more efficiently and will strengthen the SIP Goal established for this year's collaboration related to increasing reading opportunities for our students.
- District Special Education teachers met at Pullman High School with Dr. Maxwell to cover several topics. Most special education paras attended health services training at the PSD office.
- Music teachers and art teachers met with their district peers at Pullman High School. Ongoing discussions included scheduling to enhance student learning in music and state level music assessment requirements.

All groups discussed and recorded, as matter of course, plans for collaboration starting next fall. Plans at various grade levels/specialists groups included (not limited to):

- Finalizing grade level common assessments, planning for implementation and scoring review
- Possible increased STEM focus/activities in primary grades
- Continued refinement of implementation of common core standards
- Review spring 2015 SBAC experience and results, create plan guided by that data
- Review of various data to inform adjustments to instructional approaches
- Coordinate science and social studies topics into writing that aligns with common core standards
- Generally, continuing on the path set forth this year by all groups

Suggestions/offers for professional development topics for next year included (also not limited to):

- One day conference for PE teachers
- Deeper understanding of DIBELS recommended goals and using data to further refine instruction
- More training on specific reading interventions
- Differentiation strategies
- Use of Skyward
- Social Studies enhancement
- Google docs
- Storytown/Envisions/Think Central refresher, especially for new staff
- Keyboarding without Tears
- Writing strategies related to common core/SBAC format
 - Common rubrics k-5
 - Specific strategies including graphic organizers, sentence starters, etc.
 - Integration of curriculum through the writing process

At 3:00 p.m., staff members that had worked at FES met in the multipurpose room. Grade level/specialist groups took turns sharing the district wide collaborative journey they had experienced this year, including the work on the initial plan set forth in October and the work made necessary as conditions changed throughout the year.

Thank you to all staff for your hard work together and intentional focus on student learning this year.

- Bill Holman, Franklin Principal

PHS/LMS Collaboration

Lincoln Middle School teachers visited Pullman High School for district collaboration. This was an opportunity to get together with the high school to ensure commonality in grades 6-12.

- Some of the highlights included our Social studies team which discussed the alignment of courses and the content of the LMS course in relation to the changed PHS CWH course. Discussed writing development in courses. Met as grade level teachers to align units and assessments. These conversations have been on-going and this was a good opportunity to finalize some pieces.
- PHS/LMS Science team focused on growth data and the transition of 8th graders heading up to the high school. Each teacher discussed what they were using for student growth data and what elements need to be consistently evaluated for every science level.
- Our math teams met to discuss the progression of classes at the middle school and how that translates at the high school. Discussed the placement of students in math course, transition into 6th grade math and from 8th grade into 9th grade. Discussed the transition of staff at LMS. Looked at Smarter Balanced tests on the OSPI website. Geometry teachers met to discuss common assessments.
- The ELA teachers in grades 6-12 met at the high school. Each teacher brought multiple copies 2-3 examples of expository essays, ranking from below standard to above standard, to share with the group. Rubrics were included. They spent time looking at essays on their own to see what the expectations for writing were at the different levels. As a group spent some time on standards-based grading and how that looks in Skyward. We then broke into high school and middle school groups. As a MS group it was discussed where our writing needs to go in the next few years. It was proposed that teachers be responsible for one type of writing per quarter and use a collaboration day to come together to share the writing for that assessment. In this way, LMS teachers can evaluate where each grade level is, what might be missing, and work to ensure there is a supportive continuum from grades 6-8.

Art:

- Discussed the new possibility of an all-district art show, K-12. This is now more of a possibility since the City of Pullman Art Commission has moved their Art Walk activity to May. We wrote an email to the commission requesting a meeting to discuss our ideas with the city representatives. This would benefit the district as we would have a venue for a K-12 show and the city would benefit from a critical mass of participants on opening night when parents would go out to see their child's artwork.
- Our second topic was next year's goals for our collaborations. We asked the question, "What will really help us improve student learning". We decided that it would be beneficial to be able to sit in on some college level art classes and/or other art teachers and collaborate on how we can change what we do with new approaches. We also would like to investigate drawing on screen with a stylus technology. This is a great teaching tool which definitely improves student understanding as we analyze art history, compositional concepts and drawing concepts.
- We also spent 10 minutes watching a wheel thrown pottery video (the Basics of Throwing on the Wheel with Mr. McPherson) made by PHS media students. Discussed the possibility of increasing the ceramics program at the middle school level.

CTE:

- Address VDI issues, Chromebooks for CTE, MS Academy Testing Issues
- Tools and Equipment for metal and wood shop, plasma cutter demand, design and fabrication needs, students wanting more time for technologically advanced courses, and adding rigor to Bus Com.

- Pre-Engineering Room in new school to bring back Robotics, Electronics, Computer Science, Programming. Electronics and robotics combined for STEM. Materials Engineering comes out of shop courses. Looking in to the future: Stagecraft Course and Screenplay Writing

English:

1. Middle and High School Sharing: the teachers shared samples of high/medium/low writing from all grades. After reading, the teachers discussed the patterns and trends that stuck out. We also looked at rubrics and entering scores (using standards) into Skyward in order to better student feedback on specific standards.
2. Next year ideas: READING
 - a. Scope and sequence for reading next year—focusing on grade bands to make sure there aren't repeats
 - b. Remedial reading program for the high school—read 180?
 - c. Student choice in reading. Possible discussing literature circles with books of different Lexile's to promote engagement and cater to different reading levels.
3. High School only
 - a. Late work
 - i. Should our department have a policy?
 - ii. Standards based grading?
 - iii. Should we take off points for late work on big assignments?
 - b. Timed essays
 - i. Do we need more timed essays to help them feel prepared for SAT and AP?
 - ii. Yes, they help students, but we need a system.
 - iii. We don't need to include timed essays in 9th grade. We will have two in 10th.
 - c. Our curriculum note book
 - i. What is needed and what can we toss?
 - ii. We reached an agreement and came up with a few ideas for next year.
 - d. Attendance
 - i. Kids are missing class (and instruction) with excused slips for teachers. What should we do? This is affecting students' learning as they are missing instruction.
 - e. 9th to AP
 - i. Is it developmentally appropriate for students to move from 9th to AP?
 - ii. We have set the bar high, but we may need to challenge these kids more at the 9th and 10th grade level. This jump doesn't always benefit the students' learning experience, and sometimes they aren't prepared to participate in the classroom discussions. We will decide as a department, considering multiple factors which may include: write sophomore paper, take a practice AP exam, pass current state testing at the highest level, receive an A in English class, and provide the department with writing samples.
4. ELD purchased leveled-readers to complement PHS reading.
 - a. Share the resource with Wendy Kruger.
 - b. We definitely see the advantage.
 - c. Suggested titles: Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, The Odyssey, (see Senior English).
5. Senior Paper
 - a. The paper will be removed from the project. The paper will still be taught and assessed in their English classes. This paper will still give the students the benefit of writing the paper and developing an essay of this magnitude, but it will take away the stress (for teachers and students) that goes along with the deadlines. We need to decide whether the paper will determine if they are going to graduate (as before). Some kids will need to present the project in their English class, but it will lighten the load.

6. Next year ideas:
 - a. Visit the speaking standards and create a scope and sequence.
 - b. Professional development: gifted/honors training
 - c. Reading with LMS

Health and Fitness

- Discussed outdoor activities that are in the curriculum at LMS and how to adapt those to PHS. Grading procedures for the new 9th grade yearlong Health and Fitness course. Expectations and standards for new activities.

Library

- Participated in an online webinar entitled "Is There Grant Money If You Are Not a Title I school library?"
- JulieAnn Udy shared the library proposal submitted to CAC yesterday. This written proposal brought forth the request to earmark 15% of each year's Curriculum Development Adoption Cycle's budget for the district libraries to do comprehensive collection development for specific curricular areas that are being evaluated and adopted.
- Discussed having the secondary library staff present databases at a session during one of the LID days next year. Possibly videotaping the presentation to present to other staff via the web.

Math:

LMS/PHS Joint Discussion

Vocabulary Instructional Strategies

- Discussed the vocabulary strategies that each teacher designed and implemented as a part of the previous collaboration.
 - Several teachers used a version of the script & sketch activity we proposed last time with some variations in checking for correct answers, which students were able to see the script and which had only auditory clues.
 - One instructor put together 3 rounds in an honors class. The first was a script and sketch as above, but the second and third differed in a two ways. The last two rounds were problems neither of the partners had worked before. Second, round 2 offered a series of clues provided by the teacher and a student could say stop when they felt they had enough information for the graph (Name that Tune style...I can find that function in **n** clues.) Round 3 had clues provided by the teacher some of which were useless/redundant, but the reader had to choose which clues to present in what order.
 - Words into Action was a strategy used in Calculus to work on recognizing what skills were required for what vocabulary words. Ex. Prompt: Show $f(x)$ is continuous. Student would write down what concepts had to be demonstrated before being able to say a function is continuous.
- General consensus that strategies were effective and useful, that it stretched every student in class regarding concepts and vocabulary, and provided appropriate activities to pursue in the future.
- Other vocab ideas: Provide a word bank and have students describe a function only using words in the bank; telephone game relay where each person adds a characteristic to a graph and then passes it along with a clue for the next person; telephone game where it alternates between an auditory clue and a graph only clue

- Matt emphasized that the thought having students go both forward and backwards from pieces to whole makes a huge difference in student understanding

Graphing Instructional Strategies

- A concern was expressed that students were not seeing connection between the mathematical concepts and graphing. A question also arose as to appropriate use of technology in regards to graphing.
- Discussed reasons why students may not see “value” of graphing: they see it as tedious; it takes longer, not integrated with concepts throughout the year, only seen in discrete units.
- Possible ideas:
 - Provide graph systems that are already set up with scale.
 - Sketch rather than graph.
 - Provide the graphs and then ask the questions. Ex. Where on the graph can you see the two phone plans costing the same amount?
- Need to continue to work on how to show relevance – the “story” – of graphs.

PHS Team – Best practices video

Viewed a video of a Precalculus lesson on exponential functions.

- Discussed ways to foreshadow or smooth out beginning of activity.
- Talked about having a second student restate a first student’s comments which are made to the class in lieu of the teacher doing the re-stating. Possible help in reinforcing listening and vocabulary skills.
- Comments on positives observed in the lesson: activity helped students engage and makes each one think through the material, instructor was patient with students with difficulties, instructor made students clarify their answers to reinforce the concepts being taught.

Music:

1. Shared events / accomplishments in programs; what students have recently accomplished.
(State Solo / Ensemble, Earth Day Assembly, Past and Upcoming Concerts (including Greg Yasinitsky with the LMS Bands.)

2. Teaching schedules and the need for better alignment in the elementary schools. We discussed how having different teachers in the same grade level band is causing challenges. There is a need for better planning for teachers that share an elementary school (SES), and how their built in collaboration time was removed. We discussed how to address student needs facing these challenges in scheduling, and best practice for student growth and alignment.

Discussion on using different teaching methods to address the same student learning needs. How can we use different styles and still accomplish the same student learning goals?

3. Discussed our CBPA’s for this year and their impact on curriculum and student learning / growth.

- 6,7,8 Band and Orchestra “Music Review” – a listening and analysis focus
- 10 Orchestra “Pit Orchestra” – sight reading focus
- 9-12 Choir “World Class All-Stars” – sight reading focus
- 5 JES / SES – “What a Find” – Rhythm Reading
- 10 Band “Sound of Music” – Rhythmic and Pitch Reading

- 5 SES / FES – “Zoo Tunes” – Composition Focus
- 7 Choir – “Stepping to Rhythm” – rhythmic sight reading
- 8 Choir – “All State All Stars” – sight reading

Science:

Agenda

1. Transition discussion - We looked at the pre-tests for the following year to see if we are assessing the right things and/or if we find them useful.
2. Student hand-off. Cover general observations of incoming class, accommodations/changes we found useful and any special case students we should be aware of.
3. Growth Data. Compare our selected areas of Student Growth data. See what is working and what we would like to change.

Notes

The majority of the time was spent on growth goals for student data. We discussed the difference between pre-test/post-test assessments based on content vs process. The three core areas discussed were content mapping, modeling and arguing from evidence. We also looked at the pre-tests and discussed changes to assess these core areas in a generic way.

Jake and Luke are going to draft pretests for administration this spring in 8th Grade Earth Science and 9th grade science courses. We will discuss the results as part of collaboration next fall. We also plan on having each teacher present their growth goals and evaluation plan next fall.

Special Education

All district special education teachers met together today to review student transitions between schools. The new district form was discussed and evaluated for improvements. Case managers worked together to discuss specific student needs and organize needed paperwork and information for transition meetings about to occur.

Social Studies:

- PHS/ LMS - exchanged information about our adoption process regarding new curriculum at both schools. LMS perusing two books for U.S. and World History. PHS Civics asking for set of Chromebooks for Civics class. We also discussed the use of technology in both locations, current and future (Chromebooks, “Clouds,” etc.). Also covered use of common writing rubrics in history classes. LMS “piloted” our SS essay organizer this year.
- PHS - discussed civics curriculum dependent on flexibility and access to daily current events, research, election updates, etc.....need for class set of chromebooks for exclusive use in Civics class. Departmental emphasis on using more writing in our history classes. Teachers gave examples on what types of writing and rubrics used. Discussion included how to measure progress in writing and how to make it quantifiable. We all struggle with how to help the “struggling” writers. Individual one-on-one sessions with teachers and alternate assignments were mentioned as possible solutions.

World Languages:

We discussed WL Week 2015 – shared written student comments and our own points of view, both successes and shortfalls. We wrote down suggestions for next year’s week, incorporating what we learned from this year. We would like to schedule the same time of year for WL Week 2016 – the week preceding spring break. We then shared successful lessons/projects from this school year which we could incorporate into our classes next year. We also came up with 2 activities we could do together in May/June this year.