

**November 2, 2011**

*Posted by Shannon Focht at 11/2/2011*

Jefferson began the afternoon with a whole building meeting to discuss the common core standards in math the state will be using in three years. Documents from OSPI were reviewed to assist with the upcoming changes. The teachers and paraprofessionals then broke into grade level and department groups to collaborate about how the changes affect students at their levels. Each group began to answer the three main questions:

What do students need to know?  
How do we determine that they have learned it?  
What do we do if they didn't learn it?

Each grade level and department submitted a written report to the principal listing accomplishments and goals for the next collaboration.

Next month, we will be collaborating with teachers across the elementary schools to determine how the standards can be addressed consistently across the district.

Mr. Craig Nelson, Principal  
Jefferson Elementary School

On Wednesday, November 2, the Pullman High School staff continued the School Improvement Plan work that was identified as goals for the 2011-12 school year. Several departments met with teachers and staff from Lincoln Middle School. Those departments were; Special Education met to work on transition plans for students, Math worked on incorporating the newly adopted Common Core standards for Mathematics, Art and Music continued work on scope and sequence for teaching and learning in their curriculum areas. The remaining PHS staff worked as departments on identifying the types of writing and presentations that are done in each curriculum areas and at each grade level. This is the preliminary work that needs to be done to develop a consistent rubric for writing across all curriculum areas. Collecting the information on presentations skills and expectations will allow the high school to develop a sequence of skills that we will expect students to obtain at each grade level.

Mr. Joe Thornton, Principal  
Pullman High School

At Franklin Elementary, we continued work on our 2011-12 school improvement plan specifically in the areas of math and science. Our K-3 teams worked in grade level pairs to complete a math foundational skill matrix. Each grade has identified a foundational skill to focus on this year. Teams are now building common plans for assessment and interventions around those foundational math skills at each grade level. Our 4-5 team worked to further develop our science framework that outlines key skills (power standards) that all students need to master to be able to meet state standard. The elementary physical education team met at Franklin and worked to better define the critical skills that all students need at each grade level. They also spent time discussing common skill checklists and sharing teaching strategies. Elementary music and art both travelled to Lincoln Middle School to partner with middle school colleagues. Our special education team worked together to ensure we have program alignment between our resource room, speech services, and occupational/physical therapists.

Mr. Brian Moore, Principal  
Franklin Elementary School

At Lincoln Middle School we began our day reviewing our commitments to each other and the process of collaboration. We reviewed our four guiding questions and our promise to the community that this time to be used to ensure student learning. A number of our teams focused on the creation of "power standards" or "big ideas". This is a focus on what students need to know and understand to be successful at the next grade level. Some examples include:

Language Arts - Aligning our Grade Level Expectations to the new Common Core Standards in the area of reading. Our 6th and 7th grade teams discussed this together with a focus on what exactly students need to know and understand to be successful. Our 8th grade team did the same while discussing common assessments for their Civics and Washington State history course.

Math - Collaboration with the high school math team to begin a process of creating big ideas for each secondary course. The focus of the work on Wednesday was structured around Algebra 1.

Social Studies - The focus was to align the current curriculum with state standards while focusing on scope and sequence within the building in our Geography classes.

Science - The focus was creating power standards at each grade level with a focus on assessments that ensure learning.

Fitness, Movement, and Sport - Looked at the district scope and sequence and discussed possible changes regarding grading and the annual CBA assessment.

Music - Worked together as a district team to go over the grade level expectations and strategies to ensure learning in each area. Differentiation of instruction for students at different levels in the same class was also a topic.

Art - Worked together as a district team creating a scope and sequence K-12.

Special Education - High School and Middle School teams discussed how to improve their services/abilities through collaboration. Each teacher discussed their common assessments and their use of data tracking for students on Individual Learning Plans.

Overall this was a great day of progress at Lincoln Middle School and truly showed our commitment to the collaborative process and ensuring student learning.

Mr. Cameron Grow, Principal  
Lincoln Middle School

During the second collaboration day we revisited our Sunnyside Elementary School Improvement Plan (SIP) and group norms which guide our collaboration work. The building grade level teams collaborated to discuss needs at specific grade levels and to set math goals which we identified as the "Big Ideas." Using the Common Core State Standards for mathematics we answered the questions: What exactly do students need to know and be able to do? How will we know if they have learned it? How will we respond if they don't learn it? What are the instructional strategies needed to meet different learning styles and/or levels of learners? Our building instructional team shared the work to create a stronger understanding of the K-5 "Big Ideas" in the area of math. We are ready to support the district's math adoption process and we look forward to collaborating with Jefferson and Franklin in December.

Dr. Rick Bates, Principal  
Sunnyside Elementary School