



Excellence in Academics, Activities, and Character

District Improvement Team
Southwest Initiative Foundation
15 3rd Avenue NW, Hutchinson, MN
Wednesday, January 14, 2015
7:30 AM – 3:30 PM

**Assessments, Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development
AGENDA and MINUTES**

Every decision we make should positively impact student achievement.
Our focus this year is on Professional Learning Communities and on grading.
Please bring your *Learning by Doing* textbook.

- 7:30 Welcome
- 7:35 Shift in School Culture from 2009-2014 **viewed and reviewed**
- 8:00 PLC feedback/problem solving/consensus building and considering implications for our calendar and PLC training for Tier 1, 2, and 3 (**see attachment**)
8:15 – 8:22 individual thoughts
8:23 – 8:33 create a pair with an individual from a different building to share your thoughts and record your strongest thoughts
8:34 – 8:44 create a quad with another pair and try to represent each building to share your thoughts and record your strongest thoughts; if you have identified problems, find the solutions in *Learning by Doing*
8:45 – 9:20 report out strongest thoughts; identified problems and solutions

Notes: Calendar considerations, Q Comp plans; need to look at proposals for time—be creative Calendar Committee needs to see PLC #2; buy the PLCs DVDs; back to school time = 4th day is PLC work; use Teacher Academy; flex time for PLC work; TA is optional; ask current PLCs about need to be trained in Tier 1 (if no one has attended, it is highly recommended/required set the date for next fall and organize the event)

- 9:30 Grading Policy (applications by building) [Policy 618](#) (**see attachment**)
9:35 - 10 minutes to read
List something you have learned, something you must question, something you can champion
9:45 - 15 minutes to discuss by building
Determine strongest points
10:00 - 10 minutes (total) to report—your group only has 2-3 minutes
Report out in 2-3 minutes to the large group

Notes: Everyone has to have read the policy; send out the information sheets in the minutes and attached to the District newsletter; have the grade books be consistent across grade levels and disciplines; pull out the behavior/character grade from the academic grade.

- 10:00 *Grading Smarter Not Harder* (team activity recommend that every school is represented in every chapter)
(Take a break as needed)
10:10-10:15 Choose section
10:45-11:05 Read/annotate your section
11:05-11:30 Review section with group to determine key points for your chapter (**see attachment**)

11:35	Chapter 1	Grading
11:40	Chapter 2	Homework
11:45	Chapter 3	Unit Plans
11:50	Chapter 4	Retesting
11:55	Chapter 5	Creativity

Notes: Use key points of the book to share within PLCs. There are 12 books in the district for sharing. Ask to use.

11:50^{ish} Working Lunch (provided) with learning videos and productive discussion

12:00 Video: *No Humans Need Apply* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Pq-S557XQU> 15:00

What is your take away from this video?

Video: On January 5, 2015 Mercedes-Benz unveiled its car of the future

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtgAx11yOzg> 4:18

What is your take away from this video?

Leadership Team Communications from November meetings

Notes: Park: 5 out of 15 Fixes; late start activity (lesson or PP) to promote the 5

HMS: High, medium, and low achievement/growth of students; 80/20 grading policy

West: large system work = intervention program, homework, fidelity to assessments, core curriculum,

HHS: MMR data and gaps; math, reading, and science goals and extensive data; guiding questions; are we

looking at the right things to determine the success of our school; grading practices/reforms; student and staff engagement

12:45 District Testing Schedule: between March 16 – May 15 patience will be required

Calendar of Flex Time and Offerings <https://docs.google.com/a/isd423.org/spreadsheets/d/1Hwo3-qj11mCuG0nDTAgO0B8mrYOKJEjLSpGYf2u81Zc/edit?pli=1#gid=1760532029>

Notes: February Leadership Team meetings will be run by buildings

Monday, February 23 HHS from 11-3 at HHS

Tuesday, February 24 HMS from 11-3 at HMS

Wednesday, February 25 Park from 12-4 at Park

Thursday, February 26 West from 12-4 at CO

Friday, February 27 Sp Ed from 9-noon at CO

1:00 New course proposals with a **thumbs up** for:

1:00 Val Huepenbecker, Park Counselor, Second-Step, PBIS Tier 1 curriculum, for adoption for grades 3-4

1:10 Daryl Lundin, Electives Leadership Team, representing Tyler Warren, HS Ag, course structure changes

1:20 Communication Back to the Classroom considering Structure, Schedule, and Supports **see item Notes**

1:30 Work Time at SWIF/Buildings to update your building action plan.

Let's keep this document alive!

Your thinking should have changed as our work progressed throughout the day.

How does your new thinking affect your building action plan?

How can the DIT support your work? Contact me anytime at 234-2613 or debra.marcotte@hutch.k12.mn.us

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/welcome-to-dean-kamens-cool-world/> 9:23

Welcome to Dean Kamen's Cool World from *CBS Sunday Morning* on 1.11.15

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DGE1NSe3CQ> 21:11 *Dean Kamen's FIRST* (not viewed at DIT)

Next DIT meeting: Wednesday, April 22, 2015 at SWIF from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm

Chapter Key Points from *Grading Smarter Not Harder* by Myron Dueck

This is an excellent book that provides practical examples of why and how to address common concerns in regard to these basic elements of teaching.

Copies are available for check out from your building principals or CO. Please sign out a copy today.

Chapter 1 Grading

- ✓ Separate behaviors from grading
- ✓ Don't use grades for punishment; students need to care about the consequence
- ✓ Use aims, reduction, and empowerment
- ✓ The power of zero
- ✓ Make it harder for students to not complete work than to complete it
- ✓ 2-tiered testing system, makeup test would provide less favorable conditions
- ✓ If you engage students, they will do the work
- ✓ Grades should affect true ability
- ✓ Match consequences to behavior
- ✓ Don't be afraid to use professional development based on evidence

Chapter 2 – Homework

Eliminate “uniform” homework; homework should be assigned when needed and as needed

- ✓ Problems
 - ∅ Confuses completion with understanding
 - ∅ Busy work vs intrinsic motivation/authentic learning
 - ∅ Inflates grades
 - § Are they doing their own work (cheating)?
 - § Too much parent help

Problems

- ✓ Poverty – punish
- ✓ No grade –why do
- ✓ Homework first – then activity – incentive
- ✓ Poverty – less resources – tardy, etc.

Meaningful Homework (shift)

- ✓ More frequent in-class quizzes – increased learning
- ✓ Resources, answers
- ✓ Fewer questions
- ✓ Students know Learning Targets and if they “get it”

Who (students) need what (specific) – suggest meaningful homework to those that need it.

- ✓ Nine categories of students summarized
- ✓ No is correlation between homework performance and test performance

For students who clearly need homework to be successful – schools are obligated to support students

- ✓ Lunch, after school, in-school suspension (support)
- ✓ Promote flipped classrooms

FAQ

- ✓ Share load to support
- ✓ Communicate with parents
- ✓ Stay away from busy work
- ✓ Students can still be responsible, successful without homework

Chapter 3-Unit Plans

- ✓ Provide the big picture up front
 - ✓ How to:
 - ✓ Create and deliver (carefully) student friendly unit plan
 - Ø Include "I can" statements about expected
 - Knowledge
 - Reasoning
 - Skills – target
 - Product – target
 - Ø Make plans available to parents (electronically)
- 2) Use the plans throughout the learning process
- ✓ Carefully going over at the beginning will increase independent student use of the plan
- 3) Incorporate student examples and have students assess each other's work on the plan

Side notes:

- ✓ Works for any age –simplify as needed.
- ✓ Chunk or divide plan to keep from overwhelming some students
- ✓ Teacher tip – start small – one class/one subject or divide/conquer between teachers.

Chapter 4 – Retesting

- ✓ Tests are a snapshot of time
- ✓ Retesting problems
 - § Don't need to retest on everything – only need to do on parts missed
 - § May not reflect authentic learning
- ✓ Strategies
 - § Reorganize the test
 - § Retest focus on parts missed
 - § Self-assess prior to the retest – tracking sheet
 - § Retest can impact future learning
 - § Track improvement
- ✓ Tests are a starting point to learning not an end point
- ✓ Form of test items on 1st test and retest change format
- ✓ Celebrate small successes
- ✓ Reduces cheating
- ✓ Double dip with a re-quiz system

Chapter 5 –

- ✓ Creativity, motivation and engagement go hand in hand. Have/Have not and explain why
- ✓ Content driven with clear expectations
- ✓ A way to empower or engage kids – let them pick their assessment method – provide a test feedback sheet so that the teacher better understands rationale behind the student's performance
- ✓ Multiple choice assessments and mixing in some reasoning opportunities to clarify thinking "I know I am close..."
- ✓ Modern technology can enhance creativity and lead to deeper understanding
 - § Twitter – vocab example
 - § Video
- ✓ Creativity can be uncomfortable for the teachers to embrace.

Professional Learning Communities

Question 1: How has your work in PLC impacted student achievement?

- Created a consistency of curriculum
- Increased collaboration
- Improved District math scores
- Use of data – has improved and is being used
- More intentional and focused use of data

Question 2: How can we provide all teachers with training in initial and advanced PLC concepts?

- Require training during contract time
- Back to school time for training
- Required training may not assure positive “buy-in”
- New staff need to be trained
- Purposeful training – build an action plan after the training so there is an application of learning
- Use Teacher Academy time?
- Purchase DVDs from Solution Tree PLC Conference – to fill need for information that is immediate
- Need all teachers trained at the Tier 1 level
- Important to focus on group dynamics and communication skills

Question 3: What challenges did your PLC encounter?

- Time – we only skim the surface of concepts because we do not have time to work with them
- Turns into a department meeting – still need this time
- Schedules? Common prep time
- Student time – shift – consider 40 hours – contract time
- Try to talk about too much
- Need to focus

Question 4: How can we improve the PLC structure throughout the District?

- More early outs and late starts
 - Challenge for some students (MS)
 - Provide opportunities for students
- Weekly late starts – time for PLC and Prep
- Busing flipped – research says older students should start later
- Same contract start time for all
 - Consistent student day
 - One bus route
- Increase communication district wide
- Consistency across buildings
- Celebrate success
- Time to look at all areas
- We need data at our fingertips – easy access
- Shadow a successful PLC or have a rep visit your PLC and give advice/feedback
- PLC notes (all feedback)

Grading Policy #618

Review of our current grading policy and the discussion by building to determine what information was learned, what questions are remaining, and determine the causes to champion in regard to Policy 618.

Park

Learned:

- Document exists
- Not (yet) consistent with policy - ie – at elementary level, grade levels may (most do) grade things differently (assessments vs homework)
- Grades are not for motivating – should show ability
- Must separate academic and behavior grades
- Some still confused with summative vs formative
- Report card should reflect abilities – motivate in other ways

Question: Do they?

- How do we report growth? Not on report card, these kids always see negative grades

Champion:

- PLCs working on standards – need to determine what should be reported to parents to be as complete, accurate, and positive as possible.

High School

Learned:

- We're not there yet
- Who decides whether 10% is enough for practice?
- How do you get HS students trained in a points gathering system, to do formative activities when there is little to no value to the work.

Middle School

Learned:

Campus format

- Labels practice 20% and achievement 80% - pg 3 letter D
- Professional development has not happened pg 6 VIII
 - "What's a good assessment?"
 - Collection and analysis of data
- Assessments being appropriate for all students
 - How?
 - Who?

West

Learned:

- Clarify standards based on pertaining to West – definition of standards
- Add Pre K information
- Add/Clarify grading 20%-80% M, P, D