

ELA Program Networks

January 14, 1998

Brainstormed possible directions for our group:

1. support standards for students in vocational--all support programs
2. examine standards as a starting point
3. connect to SS, Math, Science, etc.
4. share "best work" that already supports Standards
5. How do Consortium groups fit in?
6. share curriculum written thus far?
7. Immediate need-Regents exam 1999-get ready now
8. subgroups: elementary/secondary
9. global changes-implications K-12 standards
10. liaison with state

Next meeting: discuss time/place

John will send out our list of possible directions. Each member should prioritize the list, return it to John, who will use this information to set our agenda for the Jan. 26th meeting. AFTER NOTE: We have set our agenda for this meeting, but will revisit this list.

We established roles:

Facilitator: Gail Evans
Time Keeper: Elizabeth Moser
Recorder: Tracy Marchionda
Key Communicator: John Cooper

Due to the few meetings we have remaining, these roles will stay the same for the rest of this school year.

Ground Rules Discussion:

- Out of the ten rules, which help to facilitate a group more effectively?
- Have fun!(#6) and Stay committed! (#7) were proposed first. Many other ground rules come under these. If we have fun, we'll be comfortable, and be more energized. By understanding that we are all coming from the same perspectives, and perhaps are somewhat intimidated, we should be fine. We need to stay focused and remember to have fun! Our wide diversity as group will help us to keep a global perspective.
- Let's think out of the box. (#5)

- What learning opportunities do our kids need to be successful with the new state assessments?
- Considering that the state will no longer exempt many special education students, we definitely need to support each other. It will be the collaboration of all areas that will ensure success for these and all students.

SOME MEMBERS STILL DO NOT HAVE FINAL DRAFTS OF THE ELA STANDARDS! We'll ask John to have copies sent to those who need them ASAP. Several people also need copies of all the assessments. Also, members who were not at the kick-off meeting do not have the original paperwork. They will need copies of those items.

Key Questions Discussion:

Current practices that support the standards:

- being a part of this group
- making sure everyone has a copy of the standards, read and become "experts" on one standard, began to write curriculum (Bloomfield)_Time and Opportunity was given--very much needed
- North Rose-Wolcott: looked at all curriculum, then became more directed with standards and an ELA coordinator, now work as a K-12 committee; 1/2 day release days, speakers
- Penn Yan: aligned state standards, to our program standards, to local standards, even down to lesson/unit plans--making sure that standards are included in these plans_ (easy to use checklist developed for this)
- Geneva: Standards are posted/laminated for easy reference
- Also piloted the state's 4th grade assessment to see where they fell
- District/Dept. expectation to standards
- Red Creek: When curriculum developed, it's purpose was to ensure that everyone would know what is happening and when. It would also help the next teacher to pick up where the students left off. Departmental curriculums written for grades 7-12. This is used when new teachers join the staff so that they know what they should be doing.
- Waterloo: Writing lab for support
- Dundee: Grade level teams develop assessments together which leads to reteaching/reassessments being similar. A reporting form for each student helps to let teachers/parents/students know where exactly they are.

It was noted that a key to all of our districts is that we are focusing on alignment and system that are already defined. A communication piece is necessary between and among grade levels in the elementary school.

Communication piece for John to take back to RIC: need better communications to home districts (i.e. The ideas we're hearing/sharing here need to be heard by our districts.)

The ELA Consortium has been working on curriculum, assessments, rubrics, etc. six districts are involved and it has addressed several of these issues.

#2 What would help support us?

- Sharing! What is working in our districts that could be shared at our meetings?
- Researching/Discussing the conditions that help make students successful in the area of literacy. Again, sharing our findings/thoughts in this area would be helpful. We also should look beyond what we are already doing. Areas to investigate:
 - staff development
 - school environment
 - readiness/summer school
 - national preventative "nets"
 - pre-kindergarten
 - extended studies
 - building school capacity
 - teacher accountability (following curriculums, standards-focused, using best possible practices)
 - scheduling
 - problem solving to contend with our constraints
 - integrating ELA into all areas
 - effective communication pieces

#3 What are our constraints/impediments:

TIME

- making sure that all students meet the standards
- consistent support for all students at all levels
- conflicting programs/philosophies within a district
- lack of adequate training/knowledge for teachers
- state's push to declassify special ed. students

- inconsistent support for students and staff
- scheduling problems
- staffing needs
- inflexible system(?)
- program constraints
- home environments that are not conducive to success
- inflexible grouping

#4 What can we do?

- Identify successful schools and leaders and look into what makes them successful
- We need to read through all the assessments and ELA standards as our first priority.
- Sharing the process as well as the product from each district would be helpful
- Aid in the communication piece--what is effective?

#5 How will we proceed? What is our priority? Where will we start?

- Individually, BEFORE the 26th, we will familiarize ourselves with the standards and projected assessments (using the most current information available.) We will use this knowledge base to move on.
- At our meeting on the 26th, we will begin to look at conditions for success.

Agenda for January 26, 1998

1. Looking at common conditions of successful schools.
2. Begin to match common characteristics with the Standards.

Future agenda item:

Look at common conditions and successes, bring back samples from our own districts showing these in place.

Recommended books:

Allington, Richard: No Quick Fix
Schools That Work

All the latest updates of the assessments (elementary and middle school) will be sent to the building principals at the end of January/beginning of February. The new curriculum guide will be sent out in February, followed by the instructional guides later on.