

District Advisory Committee Meeting
March 13, 2014
Isla Vista Elementary

Meeting commenced 9:15 am

Attendees: Superintendent Bill Banning, Asst. Superintendent Elizabeth Devita, Amy Marston (Brandon), Heather Shea (Isla Vista), Sandra Edgar (Hollister), Jil Ronkainen (Ellwood), Michele Hay (UTP-G), Chris Messner (Kellogg), Sue Bruins (Community Rep), Anna Scharfeld (TOSA Math), Tammy Merritt (La Patera), Yvonne DeGraw (School Board & Kellogg), Mary Kahn (Principal- Isla Vista), Yael Brennan (Mt. View), Joanna Lauer (Learning Center Teacher/Focuses on Differentiation), Barbara Cronin (TOSA English Language Arts)

Motion to approve the minutes- Moved and 2nded

Correction on name spelling by Bill Banning

School Report- Mary Kahn, Principal of Isla Vista Elementary

What We Are and What We Are Working On

-Strong sense of community; 509 students, 25 languages and cultures represented

-Typically have 75 volunteers/day on campus

-In Spring 2012, Isla Vista was honored to become a Distinguished School and was also placed into Program Improvement

-API above 800, but English Learners and Students with Disabilities make us PI

-Takes 7-12 years to learn a language well and we don't have our students that long

-Isla Vista is blessed with THE most amazing teachers!

-Goal for teachers and us: the need to closely analyze data to understand who our students are and what they need.

-Established a base line in the fall, and are looking at the data each trimester.

-This year, focused on Language Arts. Computer lab- using a reading program that tells us what reading level the kids are at and helps teachers know how to help push them further.

-Isla Vista uses DIBBLES- a free fluency measure from U of Oregon.

-In Sept teachers made general goals. In November, teachers made a goal for each student in Lang. Arts. These goals are shared with kids and parents. The sharing has helped immensely. The kids and families have benefited from knowing where they're at.

What Next?

-In September, Joanna Lauer met with 3rd-6th teachers to learn Differentiation

-Our teachers are approaching this in a new way: Once you know where a child is...you can differentiate in several ways. For example: in Kindergarten, Coherent Writing is important. Students are given a basic sentence structure to build a sentence with an object and an action picture. Answers might be this: I swim. I swim at the park with my friend. Or unrelated multiple sentences or multiple sentences that are related! The take-away: The same materials garner different answers.

-Roe example: 5th grade, text complexity. How to bring in the same goal surrounding a history lesson? We know what the LEXILE level is so we bring in different lesson components for each student. All components hit the same topic but challenge each student at their level. This requires a lot of work for teachers to process and implement. We do regular team planning and training. CT teachers help support them as well.

IV- What brings us alive?

-We know who are kids are. We plan for them. Then We DO it!

-We are part of Thrive Partnership- this is a component of the CA 0-5 Years program in the IV community.

-Cradle to Preschool. Goal is K readiness. 85% of kids are at the ready mark when they enter Kindergarten!

-Cal Fresh- Used to be the Food Stamps program. Once a month is a food distribution night. 125 people come to take advantage of this.

-UCSB Greek System hosts our yearly carnival. Proceeds are donated to camps.

-Viva el Arte assemblies- they perform for kids during the day and in the evening for free to the

community

-We have an autism program with about 10 kids.

-We have a preschool

-POP - Power of Play. Undergrad Psychology students initiate games at recess to promote positive play

-ASES- after school program that runs until 6pm, which provides a similar enrichment as students who would be at home. Gardening, computers, drama, free time...

-ESL - day and evening through SBCC and Parent Workshops to help teach basic parenting skills.

-100th Day Parade- down main street singing and games

-STAR students- UCSB residents of Santa Catalina Hall park here during move-in and in return IV kids get to have lunch over there with the principal

Enrichment Programs:

Drama Club- 100 kids

2 Robotic Clubs- expanded to 60 kids from last year

Music programs

Track and Field

Eye to Eye- UCSB students with disabilities mentor kids with the same disability

Tennis

Kidz art

Chess Club

Noon League- Soccer, Flag football, basketball clinics-at lunchtime 46 kids participating and we have separate girls/boys teams

Cross-Country- 45 kids run at lunch time 1.5 miles with teachers and parents

Yearbook/Video News Club

Math clubs- expanded from last year. About 25 kids from 4th-6th grades

Book Clubs- Montessori librarians at lunchtime-15 kids. They also go to Battle of the Books

Specialists:

-Farmer Mike

-Computer Lab- 8 classes with 8 ipads each from a QAD grant. Also was able to add 1:1 ipad with District grant in 6th grade class.

-Library Open: Wed evenings for families

Camp experiences:

PTA very committed to sending 4th grade to Whittier, and 6th to SIMI

PTA writes grants and fundraises to pay for 1/2 of every student's camp tuition

School fundraises \$\$ too

GREAT, not good, THINGS HAPPEN AT ISLA VISTA SCHOOL!!!!

Bill points out about GOAL SETTING for the kids. What a great model that is in regards to keeping kids engaged and accountable for their own progress. They play games where they learn; they lose, but keep going and get to see where they are. The feedback loop for students has been amplified by video games so we need to capitalize on that same model at school. Differentiation done well is almost invisible :)

Elizabeth Devita: An Introduction about Differentiation Outcomes:

Building on what we learn each year- and yes, we have a multi-year plan for the transition and implementation. What it looks like in Math standards and common core interests:

What are the interests of the DAC?

Question's submitted during the meeting:

How will teachers have time? How is this new?

How is CC differentiation from pre-CC differentiation?

How to help high achievers vs. highly gifted kids?

Worried about unengaged student behavior

Describe a 1st grade ELA lesson using differentiation

Gifted students- how to incorporate this other than GATE time?

Is small group format the most effective way to Differentiate?

How can parents push for Differentiation?

What kind of accountability is there for teachers to add in Differentiation?

Joanna Lauer: Educator in Goleta, Kindergartner in Kellogg and 2nd grader at Mt. View

-Common Core- teachers are familiar with standards and so common core although different is just another format to teach under. Differentiation strategies are following along nicely with CC standards.

-Been in Dist. for 4 years, been working with Differentiation since school at USC. Excited to be able to apply her knowledge here in Goleta.

Definition of Differentiation: the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom- Tomlinson 2013

Students Differ in their:

-Patterns, belief systems

-One line of reasoning may look odd to another despite coming to the same conclusion

-Values

-To go from concrete to abstract information- make leaps in their understanding

-Creative expression: what makes us unique and what motivates us. Creative thinking is the highest level of thinking

-Interests: How we connect to resources

We know we are different but this is tied to motivation. There is an openness and the kids are willing to engage with the learning.

Multiple Practices:

This is the language of our field. There is not one way to Differentiate. It is both an art and a science. But there are concrete ways to measure its effectiveness.

-Cooperative Grouping

-Project-Based Learning

-Visual Cues

-Tiered Assignments/Tasks

-Independent Study

-Graphic Organizers

-Leveled Products

-Small Group Conferencing

-Questioning

-Varied texts/resources

One to one support

Sentence Frames

Guide our practice:

Example lesson: California Gold Rush- what text will we choose? What graphic organizers can I use?

(graphic organizers help children prioritize info)

Questioning: there are many ways to elicit high-level thinking. Within the Gold Rush there were trends

...what trends can they glean from the facts: Levi's jeans, what was the origin of the trend? A need?

Creative thinking: How has our need for denim changed over time?

How do we pan for gold now? What problems exist today with current gold panning practices?

How will I group students? Small groups do play a role and it's important to be flexible.

With Gold Rush lesson I grouped the kids by interest- People/families v. Economic v. the Explorers

/Geography---- these groupings gets them to High Level Learning and in-depth research because they are motivated by their own interests.

Goal:

Equally want to build a team in a class while honoring differences

Barbara Kronenberg: TOSA English Language Arts

Differentiation As It Relates To TEXT Dependent Questions

-Is providing professional development in Jan and April 2014

-If you go into any class you'll see book clubs or literature circles - studying the same thing but with different outcomes or books at different levels

What are text dependent questions?

-Students are to spend more time in the text than outside OR finding evidence for their responses.

6 types of questions:

-Fisher Model- build as a pyramid to start with a part and build to a whole

-General understanding- what's the big idea (maybe discuss with a partner)

-Key Details: supporting details that support the main idea

-Vocabulary- words that you identify before for kids- identifying what word choice the author uses

-Text structure

-Author's point of view- whose perspective is this?

-Inferences- what do you know about a character based on their actions

-Opinions- Making connections between 2 books, forming opinions

How Might Teachers engage all students at their instructional level, but using a common text?

-Each student might have different questions they are working on.

-The Giving Tree- (for example)

2 different assignments- students might need more scaffolding- point them to a particular part of the text, underlining it and identifying what the vocabulary means.

Another group might be asked to look at the boy's behavior. How does he change? Others might do a writing assignment on this question independently.

How will you encourage all of them to be close readers?

RICH QUESTIONS lead to...

-Reasons to revisit the text

-Opportunities for discussion

-Prompts for writing

This makes you think about your overall goal for the students

Anna Scharfeld- MATH teacher on Special Assignment for Goleta

Common Core Math and How Teachers Might Differentiate

-Taught at Mt. View and Hollister. Majored in Math.

-Really enthusiastic about what the students are going to get out of CC for Math

3 major principles :

-Focus- not as many concepts are being taught in a grade, but the concepts are being understood on a deeper level

-Coherence- Math has many different aspects, but math is built on some basic principles

-Rigor- math is to be rigorous for all kids. In the past a lot of time was spent on fluency but equal time needs to be spent on Conceptual Understanding and the procedural skill.

8 Standards for Math Practice:

-Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them

-Attend to Precision

-Reason abstractly and quantitatively

-Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

-Model with mathematics

-Use appropriate tools strategically (using real life situations)

-Look for and make use of structure

-Look for and make use of regularity in repeated reasoning

* A major shift is that students are being tested on all 8 standards

Rigor: Conceptual Understanding and Application:

Differentiation requires a lot of preparation for a teacher to meet a variety of students needs

4th grade and 6th grade class just have different goals

Example: Jed and Ted

1st part- gives kids time on their own

2nd- work with a partner

Then have a deep conversation about what the teacher's goal is for the unit, not just getting to the numerical answer.

How can more than one numerical answer be correct?

7/6 v. 7/12- divide class in half and have them discuss each answer

Have them understand what they are solving for? What is the unit about? This requires a deep understanding and some discussion.

Need to have a conversation to understand the context for the "easy" problems

Rigor: Number Talks

Teachers can use a string of questions- start easy, and then move toward harder Q's

Then lead into discussion of the strategies each used. What's similar?

Talk about efficiency and strategy for each problem.

Needs to be flexibility with small and whole groups- knowing where they are and what your goal is.

Central Ideas to Differentiating Math Instruction include:

-Focus on mathematical understanding

-All students CAN- all have the capacity to learn

-Respectful and rigorous- every level is rigorous not just higher levels because of students' readiness, interests and/or learning profile

-Ongoing assessment- can be qualitative, or test-driven but that drives instructional choices

-Tasks have to be diverse and provide students with different opportunities to build their understanding

Q&A:

1. How do you grade a differentiated English assignment?

Not everything is necessarily graded- you pick up a lot about students through dialogue.

You can monitor small group interactions.

There is a difference from an assessment piece and an instructional piece.

A Rubric would tell a student exactly what a grade meant and gives them input on what to work on next.

2. How does a teacher decide where a child's Lexile level is and how do you adapt to growth?

Talk to the teacher. Every school in the district is working to develop an assessment of data.

IV uses Dibbles

Kellogg uses Ames=Webb.

How common can we make these assessments rather than all being different?

3. How do teachers have time to plan differentiation?

4. How is Differentiation used so some kids feel smart and other feel not smart?

This can be addressed by classroom culture.

It's all about a common goal and teaching respect.

5. Teachers are floundering- how can this be helped?

Teachers are learning CC and implementing Differentiated Instruction (DI). It's a continuing improvement, ongoing, and they will get better and better at it.

6. Academic and Social needs of High Achievers and GATE achievers?

The District is revisiting the GATE program this year.

7. Distraction behavior issue from unengaged students who don't get it?

There is no perfect lesson! It's a constant dance and balance, but proactively plan to address that need.

Make students accountable for their learning. Help kids learn how to learn. Help them figure out how to engage their own brain. Not all responsibility is resting on the teachers to come up with a fun lesson.

8. What kind of accountability is in place to make sure DI is happening in the classroom?

DI is happening. They plan as a team. Principals are having discussions with teachers and monitoring. The district has hired 3 teachers to provide our staff with support to help them plan DI within CC standards.

9. ELA Differentiated lesson in 1st grade? It is a complex consideration for the teacher there is no ONE-WAY to construct a lesson that addresses the different levels, interests and goals of the students

10. Post CC DI v. Pre CC DI?

11. How essential are aids and Parent Volunteers to DI?

Doesn't matter. Having someone in there who knows what they're doing can only enhance the learning. But with confident teachers, aids and volunteers the learning is only enhanced.

12. How can I help push DI for the kids? Engage them in their passions as much as possible- music, sports,

art, hobbies. They bring their experiences to the classroom to augment what they are learning. Have an ongoing discussion about kids' needs.

Always read to your child above what his/her own reading level currently is.

Mary- added that it feels like a complex and heavy subject. But this is why teachers choose multi-subject elementary work. This is really exciting for them and all of this is coming together for us with CC and DI. This is just the beginning but we've come so far in just one year. It's a heavy topic but it is fun for us.

Bill Banning's response:

This is challenging work and those are challenging questions. We are thinking and talking about it and making progress. I am pleased.

How to monitor teachers: Change is hard in any system. Teachers are aware of how different things are and knowing where they want to be and are able to know the difference between where they are and where they want to be.

The other thing was, starting this year; we're starting testing in Math and ELA. We're going to do this in the time it takes us to do it, not by the standards of higher government. If we really believe in these changes we have to pace it in a way we know it will stick. As much as we are floundering, we are patient. But we have developed a pathway to get us there.

Teaching to Standards: perhaps what has happened is that state standards may not be that different than CC standards.

Update: A School Board member resigned and we have a 60-day window to replace them. Board has decided to appoint someone. Deadline is Monday the 24th. Candidates must be 18, citizens of CA, registered voters and live in the district. They are required to write a letter, present a letter of reference and a resume. 2 Board members and Bill will do qualification checks. Interview on March 31st. Appointee will hopefully be identified on the 31st.

ELAC- Strategic Planning Update

Thank you for attending and for the expanded attendance at last month's meeting.

8 state areas, linked to our 8 values were what we looked at.

We prioritized these areas at last meeting to imagine an ideal Future to develop proposed goals.

Initial Findings:

DAC results- Low at 7% High at 15%. Other pupil outcomes became a big one, parental involvement, school climate, and CCS- higher rankings of priority

Principles- Pupil achievement and Pupil Engagement were highest

Community- Pupil Achievement, Pupil Engagement, Parent Involvement, School Climate

District Office Staff- Basic Services, Course Access, Pupil Achievement

Teacher meetings- Course access, Pupil Achievement

Combined Findings:

Pupil Achievement is at the top, along with Course Access (equity), Basic Services, and

Other Pupil Outcomes

Teacher Survey Results:

CC standards above 60%, Pupil Engagement above 40%, Basic Services 40% of importance

Student Focus Groups: 18 kids from every school were consulted. Questions asked of them included:

What's the best thing about school and what do you wish were different?

What makes an awesome teacher?

(from IV 5-6th graders- including a non-English speaker and a student with an aide)

Answer: An awesome teacher was someone who taught them stuff but who also knew them

What's hard for you in school? They were ok talking about their weaknesses in school. They understand that something hard can also be good for them.

Upper grades want more time to do what they want to learn.

Love science, PE and computers.

Lack of concern about materials needed.

Little discussion about safety and bullying.

Overall it was a positive exercise and worthwhile

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am

Next meeting:

Thursday, April 10, 2014

La Patera School

555 North La Patera Lane

Goleta, CA 93117

Minutes submitted by Heather Shea, Isla Vista school DAC representative