



## Pittsfield Middle High School Authentic Assessment/IBL Team Working Group Meeting

September 7, 2012

Meeting Notes (Action Items Highlighted in Red)

### 8:30 – 9:00 Opening Activities

#### Teacher Led Activator

- **Arnie led the Skittles Protocol from SRI Booklet**
  - Color coded lollipops for sharing with the group the: best thing you did this summer; biggest challenge you are facing 2012-2013; greatest educational success; what you plan to do on day one class; something you are looking forward
- Activator Debrief
  - People liked hearing answers to different questions
  - This activity and others can be found on the SRI website - School Reform Initiative protocols <http://www.schoolreforminitiative.org/protocols/>
  - For the next meeting someone else will lead an activator (was it Brian or someone else who volunteered? Please advise)

#### Meeting Agenda Review

- It was pointed out that we need to add time for talking about Essential Questions for Performance Assessment and Review Board (CSSR Network) who will be coming the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of October to visit classes and talk to students
- They are not coming to inspect and judge, but to help PMHS teachers to improve their practice
  - They will be asking some “how do you think you are doing” questions

#### Norm Review

- Arnie suggested that there are too many norms and we could simplify. The group agreed.
- Group members each took 5 minutes to read through them, adding, deleting and modify as they saw fit, and then shared with their neighbor and the larger group.
- The following Common Agreements for Effective Meetings were created:

#### Common Agreements for Effective Meetings

- ❖ Active listening, sharing and engagement
- ❖ Presume positive intentions
- ❖ Pursue a spirit of inquiry
- ❖ Full participation balanced with professional responsibilities
- ❖ Recognize that your participation matters
- ❖ Allow time for processing
- ❖ 7 norms of collaboration

## 9:00 – 9:20 Team-Led Activity Debrief

- The intent and enthusiasm was great, and the writing was good
- Paul saw us doing as we are preaching at the beginning (with the skit), but felt the we went back to “stand up and deliver” at the end... and kids were getting restless
- Maybe the skit could have been in the middle with activities building up to it
- We should have been engaging the students right away, asking which they thought was better... the lecture or discussion through a pair share
- Kids were into the skit but not the video. The video was largely talking heads for them.
- We were too far away and the sound didn’t work
- Maybe in the future we could split into smaller groups and in the lecture hall
- The Gym is not a good venue for presentation
- Seniors looked tuned out, but younger students were more engaged
- Is there a follow up to this activity? **We could take some of these refinements and move the discussion into advisory. We should practice what we preach, and have students interacting with the ideas and breaking them apart**
- Denise doesn’t think that the students really understand. Many of the kids are in classes that are still teacher centered and not student-centered. She see the middle school is way ahead as a team. At the upper levels there are quite a few teachers that still use very traditional methods. Denise is not saying that teachers aren’t doing student-centered learning, but many of them are coming from a model that was very traditional until recently.
- In the future, we should talk no more than five minutes, then have kids work in small groups and look at questions that are already answered
- The younger kids are seeing a model and developing a solid base and it will get progressively better each year
- Alexandra sits in many meetings and senses a lot of negativity and frustration
- When we do this PD, we need to keep in mind that there are a lot of good things happening. Need to be careful and sensitive about how we approach our colleagues
- **Stan could come in and share his protocol... that would be a nice thing to incorporate into the meetings to include different teachers**
- We are now changing things and changing competencies on the students. The juniors and seniors don’t fully understand and there is resistance.
- Do we need to identify steps for having teachers come in and have people share? **Bill thinks we should put the word out in CPT Teams and invite people to come in and share what they are doing**
- As an endnote, Brian shared that he likes that this group is good at supporting each other and being critical at the same time... we learn more that way

## 9:20 –10:30 Goals for 2012-2013

### a) Review action plan developed in August

- We need to look at roll out of more specific pieces of what is going on in i3 group, actually doing more work, and smaller group work to help students and teachers understand the IBL process
  - Under **STEPS to ACCOMPLISH GOALS** add:
    - Teachers come in to the i3 IBL Group sometimes
    - We could work within advisories (maybe 2 times during the year, one in October (before Student Led conferences) and one in March or April before the exhibition
      - **First we need to first figure out what we want to say** and what is most important to communicate to people about in order to move towards getting on the same page
      - **We should talk to the Advisory Council** about how to best work with teachers
    - One way is to **establish a stronger voice within CPT groups through i3-IBL team members visiting them.** David and Arnie as well
  - Bill thinks that the school needs a place (probably **an online portal**) where all the materials we are developing can be stored
  - **We could make a visual for every classroom**
  - We could **look at the model Alexandra is trying out: collect, relate, create, and donate...**
  - Maybe **collaborative CFG practices** with the CPTs
    - **Peer observation and visiting each other's classes** (Arnie thinks this group is getting to the point where they could be comfortable with observing, sharing,
  - We could **develop work-specific goals for each section of the June 2013 outcomes**
- b) **Create a calendar-based action plan** for implementing the goals
- c) Focus on authentic assessment practices (David)
- **POLs**
  - **Student-led conferences**

**IBL SMART Goals as modified and accepted by members of the i3-IBL team in August 2012 and reviewed during this meeting:**

### **IBL SMART Goal 1:**

By the end of the 2012-2013 year the i3-IBL Team will have defined, distilled, recorded and informed the PMHS community of the common “language” that describes the inquiry-based learning (IBL) process at PMHS, that is easy to understand, and connects to the work of the varied PMHS professional development teams.

**IBL SMART Goal 2:**

By the end of the 2012-2013 year the i3-IBL Team will have created a set of materials to describe and record their work that includes project design template, assessment rubrics, POL (Presentations of Learning) and exhibition guidelines, and sample project overviews.

**IBL SMART Goal 3:**

During the 2012-2013 year members of the i3-IBL Team will expand school-wide awareness of i3-IBL materials, methods, and professional development practices by sharing them with their respective CPT teams at least once a month, while Arnold Clayton and David Stephen will each visit every CPT team a minimum of two times.

**IBL SMART Goal 4:**

During the 2012-2013 year members of the i3-IBL Team will work to create a framework and materials that describe a process for student Presentations of Learning (POLs) at PMHS and then pilot this process within each of their classrooms at least two times.

**IBL SMART Goal 5:**

During the 2012-2013 year members of the i3-IBL Team will work to refine a framework and materials that describe the process for the public exhibition of student work at PMHS and then pilot this process in the spring of 2013, engaging 50% of the faculty and 75% of the student body.

- It was also discussed that it could make sense to focus the group on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills... specifically those identified by the PMHS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills team

**PMHS 21st Century DRAFT Expectations and Competencies – June 2012**

The following DRAFT expectations and competencies were developed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills team for vetting by the staff. They were already sent out for feedback, but there wasn't much. We're going to look at them over the fall, but Sheila doesn't believe there will be a whole lot of changes

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to be productive, self-directed learners.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to be an engaged and responsible member of their community.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to acquire and synthesize information.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and solve problems

Arnie wants to help PMHS teachers to refine their cooperative learning practices in the classroom. He pointed out that all of the above 21<sup>st</sup> century skills/strategies can be applied to them

- In roll out just send... they are thinking of Gateways two years out for 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders (SLC Focus group)
- Alexandra will send materials on Senior Projects and Katie will send materials on Student Led Conferences
  - Focus on classroom strategies (Arnie)
    - Community in the classroom: opening and closing activities
    - Strategies for creating successful cooperative learning groups
    - Teaching students to take responsibility for their own learning. Opening goal setting and bclosing reflection activities. Teachers aren't the only ones that have to maintain order and work ethic
    - Arnie thinks that with one push we need to tighten up cooperative learning strategies
    - There is a big difference between group work and cooperative group work
    - The goal is to get the class to function by itself with minimal interaction
    - Sheila thinks it effective and worthwhile, as well as being a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill
    - Create a user group to share what strategies are working
    - Keep modeling it like we have done... **notion of what will I see, what will I hear?**
    - Looking at student work and peer observation protocol
  - Issues... Josh says be aware of age group and what is appropriate. Younger kids have a lot of concrete thinking instead of abstract thinking
  - Be aware that many teachers are already doing it, but may need more PD around skill uilding

#### 10:30 – 10:45 Break

- Brian shared the Student Directed Learning protocol that Stan has developed for his math class
- Josh shared his group work folders

#### 10:45 – 11:30 Late Start Wednesday PD's

- a) A "recipe for success" for the Late Start Wednesday sessions was brainstormed by the group.
- Arnie suggests that we each offer some sort of information, then an opportunity for people to process, and finally, a chance to see that they understand
- The group brainstormed the following things to keep in mind for the late start Wednesday presentations/workshops:
  1. Reach out with a friendly email about a week ahead that invites questions and suggestions
  2. Say what expect
  3. Include Essential Question/expected outcome

4. Have teachers walk away with something concrete
  5. Model interactive , student work-centered instructional practices
  6. Use formative assessments as beginning and end
  7. Various break-out activities
  8. Provide a hand-out/take-away when appropriate
  9. Facilitate some kind of share-out/debrief at the end
- It was also noted that the follow-up piece is essential. Faculty feels like their voice is being heard, and that the debriefing of the sessions is more important than the actual PD in order to help people make sense of the subject matter and begin to internalize and work with the content.

## 12:00 – 1:00 Planning Time

- Time was given to team members for planning and agenda development for the session that each them will lead during late start Wednesdays. Team members were asked to consider the following:
  - Topic
  - Date
  - Focus or Essential Question
  - Presentation
  - Interactive Work
  - Debrief/Report Out
  - Assessment Mode
    - A variety of exit modes
  - Handout/Materials
- Members then presented their ideas for clarifying questions and warm and cool feedback from the group
- Planned Topics include:
  - Inquiry-based questions with concrete concepts – **Paul**
  - Collaborative skills and practices – **Bill and Arnie**
  - Inquiry-based questions with abstract concepts – **Brian**
  - Seminars and other text-based discussions - **Katie** (maybe when Kevin is around?)
  - Rubrics & Tuning Protocols - **Josh** (Arnie would be an asset to this and could follow up in CPTs. He would need a date to plan.
  - Authentic Assessment –(**Alexandra, Students and David**)

### Authentic Assessment Team Ideas (Alexandra, students, and David)

- EQ: How can we best assess what students know and do in ways that are consistent, effective, and meaningful?
- Ask teachers to come with a lesson or competency or something they want to teach and let them work together and go through steps. (Should we break them up in teams or departments?)
- A video ... what is authentic assessment clip at the beginning of examples of authentic assessment
  - A brief collection of examples of constructing knowledge, interacting with the material, and creating and donating
  - Reflecting and presenting
    - Share an authentic assessment idea or experience
    - Teachers do Q&A with students
    - By then we may have a template for POLs with an overlay the 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies
      - Parker Senior POLs could be model
      - POL Components
        - Overview of process
        - Significant learning
        - Product
        - Reflection
      - 3 steps for AA from CSSR
        1. Collect (construct knowledge)... significant learning
        2. Relate (disciplined inquiry)...
          - Making important connections
          - Interacting with the material
          - Extending knowledge
        3. Create and Donate (project or product)
          - Tangible product
          - Value beyond school / Real world value
      - The POL is a presentation and reflection
      - 12 Steps to Beautiful Work could provide a good handout for faculty
      - Have people bring their competencies and plan authentic assessment around that
        - This year all the grading will be on competencies
        - These are subject and teacher specific
        - Departments have worked on them together
        - On average there are 10 competencies per year long course
      - Ask people to bring something in and go through process of creating an authentic assessment
      - They could reflect on an AA or PBL that they have done and how it went

- We could send something out before –hand to help prepare faculty members for the workshop
- a) Consider content as well as web-based resources
- b) Topics include:
  - Inquiry-based questions with concrete concepts – Paul
  - Collaborative skills and practices - Arnie and Bill

### **Inquiry-based questions with concrete concepts (Paul)**

- Paul is presenting how to run an inquiry based session when what you are teaching connects to real life situations
- Show video at beginning of session
- Dan Meyer math... on TED
  - 5 main points
    - Use multi-media
    - Encourage intuition
    - Ask short questions
    - Let students build the problem
    - Be less helpful
  - 5 problems
    - Lack of initiative
    - Lack of perseverance
    - Lack of retention
    - Aversion to word problems
    - Eagerness for formula
- Talk about helping students to develop an understanding of how to ask their own questions
- Math Curriculum Makeover... how to sell a product to a market that doesn't want it
- Paul wants to give teachers a problem applicable to their discipline
  - Make an essential question that is applicable to the main question you are teaching
- The debrief part could be asking teachers to think of how they could do this in their own discipline
- Get into small groups, and talk about one way you could do this
- Do some exit strategies

### **Collaborative Skills and Practices (Bill and Arnie)**

- EQ: how can students collaborate to learn a technique and use it to produce a piece of art
- Understanding an art technique through collaborative skills



- Have each teacher bring in unit, activity or project they can apply this to
- Arnie and Bill will do a unit on marbleizing paper
- Lecture burst start, quick video, students take notes and develop a work plan as they watch the video
- Talk about encouragement protocols
- Art technique itself is similar to science lab... science or cooking procedure
- Students will take on roles and work collaboratively
- Culminating activity : gallery walk with post-it comments
- Have teachers brainstorm how they can put more collaborative work in their group
- CPTs will brainstorm how to apply to their content
- Collaborative piece is the focus
- Maybe kids should figure out first, or take guesses at how marbleized paper is made
- Then give feedback at end of project, what do you think went right and what went wrong

#### **Inquiry-based questions with abstract concepts (Brian)**

- EQ: How do you work with students when inquiry-based problems don't connect with real life?
- EQ: How can you teach an abstract concept in an inquiry-based manner?
- When kids develop the knowledge on their own, then they understand and own it.
- He will reference Paul's lesson to see what works and doesn't
- Start with brainstorm in which each teachers thinks of one or more problems that fall into that category
  - 4 separate worksheets, one for each subject area
  - Group up and discuss rules, patterns, guidelines and consistencies
  - Then entire class comes together to synthesize observations to develop content objective
- Wants to block in time for people to take the lessons they have done before and see how they can look at them through this lens
- Brian will work in a debrief at the end

#### **Seminars and other text-based discussions (Katie)**

- How can inquiry –based seminar discussions enhance student learning?
- Katie will put together an outline and email it to the group

**After wrapping up the discussion on Late Start Wednesday topics, the group then began a discussion about how to work with advisory groups and/or grade levels to emphasize i3-IBL concepts**

- Looking at bringing in the main concepts and themes to the advisory
- Or maybe we could do it by grade levels... not by advisory
- Can group two grade levels together
  - Bill will help Sheila with 11/12
  - Brian, Alexandra and Josh will do 7/8
  - Katie and Paul will do 9/10
- Do it on a “discussion day”...in advisory on Tuesdays
- Have a review of i3 grant basics (like this morning’s presentation)
- We can look at the PowerPoint from this morning and emphasize
  - Authenticity... ask them why is that important
  - Formative as opposed to the summative assessments
  - Student-centered instruction
  - Authentic Assessment

**The group then discussed the upcoming PAR Board visit**

- Arnie said that we should all think about this, not as an evaluation, but a chance to get objective observations
- What feedback would be most useful from a group of impartial educators are coming on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Brian: Is there evidence of inquiry-based learning and authentic assessment within the school?
  - Are there spaces in the school that are being underutilized for inquiry-based learning?
  - What evidence do you see of students having more voice and choice in school culture?
  - What evidence do you see of student ownership of the school?
  - Is there evidence of authentic assessment happening at the school?

Finally, the group reviewed the “Driving Forces and Restraining Forces that either helped or hindered our work together today. The following driving forces were cited:

- The agenda structured time and allowed the group to prioritize
- Collaboration
- Transparent facilitation
- Level of comfort with group
- Active listening
- We worked on new norms and observed them well

- Not too much “Bujiganga”
- Strong participation
- Debriefing
- We are moving forward

Restraining forces cited:

- Long agenda
- Some people needing to leave early
- Miss energy of absent members