SMART 2011-2012 Academic Year & Summer Team Report

Team Members: Brian Schmitt, Marc Copani, Katie Esposito, Ashley Miskar, Cathy Smith, Dedra Hurd, Lynnette DePoint, Lynn Halliwell, Jillian Dunkleberger, Michael Kitts, Peter Mahan, Hollie House, Beverly Reyn, Sally Kingsbury, Liz Stoddard, Lisa Mason, Krystal Ward, Nicole Erkan, Marie Stroup, Sharon Kane

Team Name (For example, Delaware Elementary): Hannibal High School and Kenney Middle School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Write the number of Teacher participants for each period.</th>
<th>Academic Year #’s</th>
<th>Both Summer &amp; Year #’s</th>
<th>Summer Institute #’s</th>
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<td></td>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>19 participants</td>
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Team location and focus (For example, Delaware—ESL literacy)

Hannibal Central School District—Self-reflection and Assessment During a Year of Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Data collected and analyzed on teacher learning (For example, faculty surveys, and teacher reflective journals).

Teachers met weekly for about twenty-four sessions of two hours each, discussing relevant articles as well as one book, Life’s Greatest Lessons: 20 Things that Matter, by Hal Urban (2003, Fireside). Almost every session began with a literacy activity involving the teachers as participants. We debriefed, and often teachers borrowed the materials and tried out strategies in their classrooms. In addition, individuals or small groups initiated projects of many types, and reflected on their processes, their own professional growth, and the impact on students as they proceeded. I will briefly describe several to show the variety:

- Peter, an art teacher, worked on creating a documentary for the Oswego Marine Museum to be used on-site to tell visitors the story of the Derrick Boat’s rescue operation in 1985.

- Lisa and Krystal, who teach high school Living Environment courses, created lessons and projects relating to invasive species, vaccines, genetic engineering, Charles Darwin, and endangered species. They incorporated the Common Core Literacy Standards into their planning.

- Katie and Ashley worked on ways to increase the amount of pleasure reading their fifth graders do outside of school. The experimented with lending students books of their choice to bring home, with no assignments or grades attached. When the students brought the books back, they were asked to reflect on their reading processes and share thoughts with partners.

- Marie, the district’s only librarian, worked on various ways to promote the use of the library. She created “Staff Picks” displays in each of the three libraries; worked with new teachers in various disciplines as well as with student teachers from SUNY Oswego; updated websites; participated in book give-aways; and created library
booths during family nights.

- Lynn, a physical education teacher, taught for a semester using a theme she called “Faith vs. Fear.” She created and submitted a grant, and she invited guest speakers such as zumba instructors to visit her classes. One day Sharon, Marie, and Marie’s library intern Jacquie participated in her classes, giving book talks to her fifth and sixth grade girls.

- Marc, a first-year teacher, created a unit based on the CCSS, complete with exemplar lesson plans and rubrics.

- Liz, a science teacher, created a new unit on simple machines that connected the CCSS with NYS Intermediate Science standards. She also became a registered teacher on Donorschoose.org. As a result of her reflection and desire for ongoing education, Liz took the step to apply for the Educational Leadership CAS at SUNY Oswego.

- Hollie, an art teacher, developed a unit on Chris Van Allsburg for her eighth graders that incorporated nonfiction resources and that involved students creating artwork, presenting to a group, critiquing others’ artwork, and writing process reflections.

- Michael and Cathy read extensively to explore the literature on social promotion and retention, then designed surveys that they hope to give to teachers, administrators and students in the district. They are especially interested in the potential impact of students witnessing their peers being socially promoted.

- Beverly, a reading teacher, implemented many of the ideas she encountered in our discussion groups. She worked on applications of several of the principles in Hal Urban’s book, and she taught lessons using some of the literature introduced in our sessions.

Data collected and analyzed on student learning (For example, annual literacy assessments/NYS report card disaggregated data for 4th grade ELA, analysis of rubric scores on students writing samples each quarter for students in versus not in the program).

Since many of the activities listed above involved plans for future teaching, data has not yet been collected and analyzed. Several teachers who tried strategies and used certain books or learning centers, or who taught newly developed units implementing the Common Core State Standards, noted the students’ engagement and interest. It is hoped and anticipated that, as teachers apply what they have learned and developed through this collaborative course on self-assessment and reflection, their students’ achievement and love of learning will be enhanced.
Here are a few sample comments about data collected, and evidence of student impact:

-The kids were enthralled! They are so excited about their projects and have been working passionately and diligently to plan and craft their inventions. It is wonderful to hear meaningful, higher-level conversations about the content that was previously taught. Creating opportunities for students to work together with hands-on projects is critical to meeting students’ needs and interests. They are learning so much and don’t even realize it.

-I have high hopes for the success of my donor program. With the supplies wished for, my students will be able to apply their knowledge and understanding of electricity to a variety of circuits and electrical devices.

-I anticipate that with continual reflection along with modifications to my instruction, my students will reach their potential and enjoy the experience along the way! I am sure that my upcoming studies will enhance my teaching perspectives and tools as well.

-[I used] observations, survey, pictures, talking with colleagues, video

-The [student] response was wonderful and the participation was about 90%!

-The Immune Project went great. I had the students assess themselves and each other. I thought that provided them with a different opportunity than just me grading.

-Genetic engineering was so great, better than I could have expected, and now I think I should incorporate more next year.

-The hope is that students taking Studio in Film from Mr. Mahan will gain knowledge about the filmmaking process as it relates to a “real life” need in the community. A 15-year-old video production student from Oswego was a part of the film team so they can see how dedication to a career path can pay dividends.

We identified and worked as a learning community during our 40+ hours of meeting as an inquiry group. Collaboration was an essential part of the course, as teachers worked together in small groups to develop projects, and as they shared progress reports and gave feedback to each other.

Key student achievement issues involved engagement and interaction. Many students in this district face huge challenges, including poverty. Teachers constantly sought ways to offer support and encouragement to their classes and to their colleagues who were trying innovative strategies to increase learning and self-confidence in students. Hope was a major and recurring theme throughout the year.
The inquiry group shared roles and responsibilities throughout the weeks we met. Several teachers brought in articles for the group to read and discuss, and many of the participants initiated and facilitated discussions.

Many teachers expressed gratitude for the support that the group provided and felt that the professional development was valuable. The following sample quotes exemplify this:

- “I enjoyed being able to spend time with colleagues discussing things that matter to us.”
- “Getting a chance to discuss our lives as teachers and reflect on classroom practice is critical and inspiring.”