Team Action Report Form

SMART 2011-2012 Academic Year & Summer Team Report
(Copy or save this form into a word processing document, update it, and submit it to Project SMART, beth.canale@oswego.edu)

Team Members: Denise Waterman, Teresa Fisher, Simone Thornton, Alison Bristol, Kathy Gosh, Chris Capella, Joanne Powless, Laurie Rutter.

Team Name (For example, Delaware Elementary): Onondaga Nation 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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Team location and focus (For example, Delaware—ESL literacy) Onondaga Nation School ~ Literacy

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

One of the themes of this year’s inquiry and literacy coaching group came from last summer’s institute’s focus on Judy Chicago’s The Dinner Party exhibit. In fact, we were so moved by the pictures of the exhibit that six of the eight members of the group plan on taking the trip to The Brooklyn Museum in order to see the permanent installation June 29th and June 30th of 2012. Art teacher Chris Capella wrote in her journal that Judy Chicago’s plate settings in The Dinner Party influenced one of the eighth grade projects at the end of the school year. The students and Ms. Capella went to the library to research notable Native people, but they found that some library books are not accurate and do not truthfully tell the correct stories. The eighth graders chose any part of the dinnerware set to create a design on a person in history or one of their family members that they researched. Research did not only come from library books, but sometimes from families or the person themselves. This inspired the students. Chris said, “My expectation was that of meeting the NYS Standard that covers cultural contributions to the arts, but it turned out to be more of a life lesson or two.” I saw the finished plates that contained symbolism in color and design, and it was clear that these students evoked the spirit of The Dinner Party.

A special education teacher, Alison Bristol wanted to bring art into her teaching by utilizing picture books for a unit of study on the oppression of African Americans from slavery to the present time. She learned that students were able to make wonderful connections to their own lives. She did a weeklong unit on Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad. “This picture book provided a wonderful mood in the illustrations. . . the text was simple enough, with few words per page, for the boys to feel safe to read aloud at their lower levels, and feel successful.”

Laurie Rutter, a second year reading teacher at ONS talked about the challenges and joys of being a reading teacher at the elementary level (Laurie worked in the high school in the district previously). She commented that she was glad to get useful suggestions (from me) but there is one student that puzzles her and she is most worried about him (Laurie sees him on a day I’m typically teaching at Oswego, but I was there to observe their interaction once. He is puzzling.) She spoke about the
wonderful collaboration she has with the seventh and eighth grade ELA teacher. They coteach many topics like the Holocaust, poetry and Greek mythology. She wrote in her journal about constantly progress monitoring on a system called RTIm.

Joanne Powless’s goal this year as a second year fifth grade teacher was to deepen her reading and writing program. She revealed her struggle with keeping students invigorated and engaged in journal writing. She feels she needs to work on finding the “magic hook” that will turn around their “angst” towards writing.

Kathy Gosh, a veteran second grade teacher focused on a writing program. She started off having the kids write personal narratives and then used the “Story man” graphic organizer for all different kinds of writing. The children moved from narratives to nonfiction, using story man, which worked really well. In her words she “kicked it up a notch” by having the students do three writing prompts, then choosing their favorite one to edit and revise.

We also met in an Inquiry Group Saturday mornings about once a month at the local Panera Bread. We discussed most of the chapters in Activist Art in Social Justice Pedagogy. Our meetings would last for about two hours, and I think everyone enjoyed these meetings away from school so that we could socialize and reflect on the reading while relaxing and having a cup of coffee and a breakfast treat. Every time we met we would have most of the group present. It is commitment like this that makes my facilitation of the group easy.

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).

Denise Waterman who is on our team teaches third grade at ONS and Joanne Powless, who is also on our team teaches fifth grade. Annual state exams taken last year in third grade and fifth grade were examined for improvement. In the third grade ELA exam, 50% scored between a two and four with 8% scoring a three or four. In the fifth grade assessment 100% scored between a two and four with 13% scoring a three or four. The interpretation of the results is problematic due to the low enrollment in the classes, which in turn skews the results. It is easier to come to valid conclusions with the other data that the team collected.

Alison Bristol, special education teacher chose picture books to use with her third grade self-contained students. Alison would have the students do trial readings with these students to develop fluency (reading rate, phrasing, and correct reading). As a whole, students improved from reading 38 wpm (words per minute) to 68 wpm as they did repeated readings to develop this skill. Alison also used the “story man” graphic organizer to help these students with their writing. It is clear that this organizer allowed the students to conceptualize the material more easily and they were able to organize their thoughts with greater depth. Alison also had her students pay close attention to the illustrations of the text and how this affected the story line. They showed growth in making connections between the illustrations and the text.
Simone Thornton, kindergarten teacher on our team had her students: draw shapes in certain colors, draw a tree, draw themselves, and on the back of the paper write numbers and a couple of sentences. She collected data three times during the year: September, January and May. There were varying degrees of sophistication to start off with, but every student improved with regards to this assessment. One could really see growth in how they conceptualized themselves – initially a very basic drawing but at the end of the year most students drew much more detail for their self-portrait.

Teresa Fisher did a No Bullying unit for students in 3rd-6th grade. She found that students did a good job recalling details in a story, but they had difficulty with determining genres of a story. Kathy Gosh found that by using the “story man” organizer, students are writing much more. The students were writing on average three sentences per story at the beginning of the year. In May they wrote an average of eleven sentences per story, which is a 335% increase. The average number of words that students wrote in September was eighteen, and in May the number of words increased to eighty-five.

All of Laurie Rutter’s third grade students improved in reading and improved in fluency at least two levels. One third grade student started out not knowing her alphabet or any word sounds and she is now reading at a second grade level – an enormous jump.

Joanne Powless compared writing pieces in her fifth grade classroom and she found a wide variety of writing abilities in her classroom. She is a strong believer in writer’s workshop and promoting writing in free writing journals. Some students struggled and would only write three or four simple sentence responses whereas others would write a page or two.

Because it’s such a small, unique school with a 100% Native American population, it is difficult to compare the data year to year, class to class, or compare the data to another school. Much of what I obtained was anecdotal data; so it is difficult to make sweeping generalizations about student or teaching performance.

Revised 4/19/12
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Describe a leadership project (ACTION) you plan to undertake.</td>
<td>Describe the Rationale for the project.</td>
<td>Who is responsible for each action/Component?</td>
<td>During what months will you complete each action?</td>
<td>How will you know if the action has made a difference? What data will you collect? How will you gain feedback about your leadership of the initiative?</td>
<td>What resources will you need for this action? What costs, if any will be incurred? What are possible sources of funding for these resources?</td>
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<td>We would like to strengthen the ties between the community and the school and give students a say in their education. We are hoping to have some of the elders come in to share their knowledge every month. We’d also like the kids to be more aware of the land that the Nation School sits on and we’d like to have the students take photographs of the creek every day of the school year. We would like to see a day when all students could bike or walk to school. We would like to address 21st century skills – college</td>
<td>Basically we think it’s important that the students at the Nation School have an awareness of the home school connection. By bringing in elders to the school we are hoping that the students understand that they are walking keepers of history, language and culture. We also want the kids to feel connected to the environment, by taking pictures of the creek. We would like the students to have say in</td>
<td>We will have student representatives who will act as a “student board” to determine a timeline and help with organizing the elders, bike trip, photography of the creek. Our inquiry group will also meet and facilitate the leadership project.</td>
<td>We will do some planning over the summer and then have monthly meetings with the student board to determine the more specific timeline.</td>
<td>We would like to have students display their work – the pictures of the creek, pictures of elders’ visits in a sort of photo-essay. We would like teachers and students to keep writing logs of their experiences. We will ask students to fill out a survey of how they thought the year went.</td>
<td>Journals (can be obtained at minimal cost). Visual displays (maybe trifolds). We can get creative with funding sources – either Project Smart money or bake sale, or fruit smoothie sale.</td>
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readiness, community projects, what it’s like to be a global citizen.

| what they want to accomplish during the year to give them more ownership. |  |  |  |