

PREP

Penobscot River Educational Partnership

Curriculum Coordinators' Meeting

April 13, 2009

UTC

Attending: Ellen Almquist, Mary Giard, Liz Huggins, Debbie Bird, Kristen McCollum, Sandra Cookson, Beth Clifford, Judy Pusey, Owen Maurais, Pam Kimball, Joanie Speyer, Valeria Michaud, Roy Allen, John Doughty, and Dr. Gail Garthwait

A number of visitors were introduced and welcomed to the meeting.

Dr. Gail Garthwait, associate professor at the University of Maine, and John Doughty were introduced as our guest presenters. Dr. Garthwait and John shared information about the use of differentiated instruction through the medium of technology to support learning. John discussed the possibilities of having college students developing applications and tools that others could use. Dr. Garthwait shared her vision of having this opportunity be developed as a portal for PREP teachers.

Dr. Garthwait then outlined the possibilities of having the portal designed to include lessons built around the Maine Learning Results in the various content areas, and each standard would contain links to applets to be developed by college students or would be connected to active links. Dr. Garthwait mentioned the use of Moodle and Virtual High School. She demonstrated the potential uses of programs such as Turtle Pond that students could utilize to develop skills around a particular math standard (e.g. measurement). Owen Maurais expressed interest in getting conceptual feedback about the project and also wondered about the feasibility of developing a pilot to focus on a particular level and content area. There was mention of the possibilities around connecting applets to specific programs (text series) as well as a process for getting assistance with the vetting process as items are added to the portal.

Dr. Garthwait explained the connection to the DOE site and future possibilities for funding once the use of the ATM has ended. The potential for connecting with a variety of web-based resources is exciting. Owen requested that the development of this offering be a combined effort between PREP schools, the University, and college students. Having collaboration between all of the players would be key in getting a tool that would meet classroom needs.

There was a comment about the value of providing offerings in science and social studies as these are areas that are not receiving as much focus as literacy and mathematics are currently.

Dr. Garthwait asked if there were volunteers interested in serving on a steering committee. A number of people expressed interest. Judy Pusey will provide Dr.

Garthwait with the e-mails of those who expressed interest. Owen asked that a portion of the first PREP curriculum coordinators' meeting in September be dedicated to a roll-out of the new project.

1. Old Business

- Updates from Owen

Owen shared the potential PREP staff development options for 2009-2010. He reviewed the possibilities around each topic. The work with PLC's and Ellen Holmes was discussed. Ellen is willing to meet with systems to find out what the individual needs are. ***Owen would like individuals to respond to the question as to how to best provide Ellen with the information she will need with respect to her planning for next year's sessions.***

The Maine Boys Network will be asked to provide a 2-hour presentation in the fall and then a discussion would follow and would focus on what might be done with this information and planning next steps. The sessions will cost \$400 plus expenses.

The literacy initiatives were discussed. With respect to when these sessions will be offered, Owen will discuss possibilities with the University faculty.

Owen mentioned that Marcia Booty's presentations were very well attended last week and feedback was very favorable as has been the case with each of her sessions. Marcia's schedule is very busy with respect to trying to plan for continued work with her next year. Ellen Almquist recommended either Heidi Goodwin or Lee Gowell as individuals who would do an excellent job of continuing on with the work that has been done to date.

First Aid/CPR- Mary Kuskelly (sp?) from Bucksport is prepared to provide this training during late August. Up to 30 individuals can be trained per session at a cost of \$40-\$50 per person. ***Owen requests that curriculum coordinators determine between now and our next meeting how many individuals would be attending from their systems.*** As many trainings as are necessary will be offered.

Jim Artesani is willing to meet with individual systems regarding their current levels of implementation and needs around the behavioral component of RTI. The meetings will be organized as a K-12 discussion for each "district".

Each school system within PREP will be assessed at \$1,500 for the 2009-2010 school year. Owen is very cognizant of the need to limit overall expenses in order to maintain the same level of funding as last year. The systems who are participating in the pre-referral initiative are contributing a significant percentage of funding.

Ellen shared that a number of individuals from her system visited the Yarmouth School Department. She was very impressed with the framework they have put in place. Each school has a designated team leader and an interventionist. The classroom teachers and the interventionists collect the student data, depending on the level (tier) of instruction. Interest was expressed in having representatives share their experiences with us at our

next meeting. Mary will investigate the possibilities and then e-mail us regarding her findings.

Sharon Greaney offered a session last week that was very well received. She is willing to continue working with systems next year. She will be attending the May 11th pre-referral planning session as will Ellen Holmes (12:00-1:30PM at UTC).

The literacy session for grades 6-12 went very well last week. Mary Giard shared a national perspective on the current practices in literacy instruction. Margo Dale presented information on fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development. The specificity of information was appreciated. Owen will review the feedback forms from this session to develop a 1-2 sentence statement regarding a focus for next year's literacy work.

In preparation for the May 11th meeting, Owen will let Ellen Holmes know that we are interested in discussing the challenges of implementing RTI and learning about possible structures for offering interventions.

Ellen Almquist shared her district's recent session on Compass Learning. This web-based program is able to develop individual lessons for each student in each content area based on students' NWEA scores.

Owen asked which offerings might be held from 2:30-4:30PM next year. The Boy's Network programs will be scheduled during this time frame with pizza provided at 4:30PM and a discussion would follow. At this time, it seems as though all other offerings will occur during the school day. ***Curriculum coordinators were asked to get feedback on this plan.***

There was a discussion about working collaboratively on the development of RtI documents. Owen has asked that any available documents (Yarmouth and Bucksport specifically) be sent to him digitally as he will make those available for review prior to the May 11th pre-referral planning meeting.

- State Updates

Donna Oliver provided updates from the State. Please refer to the hand-outs she provided.

There was a discussion about the upcoming sessions entitled "Transitioning to a Standards Based System" to be held from May 12-15th. (The final day will address those schools interested in participating in the pilot of this work.)

The NECAP webinars are being offered during the week of April 13-17. The ATOMIM sessions regarding the NECAP will include the DOE information and will also provide math teachers with the opportunity to discuss specifics related to their content area.

2. New Business

- MCLA Update

Beth Clifford reported that the Board was pleased with the turn-out for the spring conference. She noted that comments were made on the feedback forms about the frustrations with the Leader's Edge report session. Beth shared the planning committee's regrets about the difficulties with the Mac computers and with the fact that we learned that the Leader's Edge report will not be available in the future. The planning committee was disappointed with its communications with the representatives at NWEA. The Board is interested in suggestions for the November 9th conference date. Robert Marzano will be presenting on November 10th.

The group was reminded about the Board position that is opening up for the region. It will be discussed at the May 1st EMCC meeting.

- Literacy Cohort

Kristen McCullom reported that the sessions are going well with two remaining. She and Maureen Montgomery met recently to discuss a summer session and are tentatively looking at August 13 and 14th. They would like to open participation up to administrators. Each participating district can invite the same number of individuals as it currently has attending. Concerns were mentioned that administrators may not be able to participate given the Linda Dorn sessions to be held during the 3 days prior. Topics being considered include: RTI, paperwork related to RtI, literacy surveys, literacy strategies as well as a number of other possibilities. Kristen will e-mail individuals regarding the ideas and feedback is requested. The sessions will continue to be offered after school next year.

- Feedback from MCLA Conference

Beth noted some comments on the feedback forms.

Ellen noted a couple of differences in her sense of the language from LD 1325 and what Wanda Monthey shared about the document. One item being about the actual requirements around assessments for graduation and the challenges around the personal learning plans. Wanda said that there would be sample documents placed on the DOE website for guidance soon after the conference, but these have not materialized yet.

- Book Study for Next Year

Leading Change in Your School: How to Conquer Myths, Build Commitment, and Get Results by Douglas Reeves was mentioned as an option. Delivering on the Promise was also mentioned. The group decided that we would begin the year with Delivering on the Promise. Owen is asked to purchase 8 copies of the book for the group to be distributed at the May meeting if possible.

- Other

Sandra Cookson shared information about the MLTI initiative at the high school level. She raised a question about the need for professional development for teachers. The sense of the group was that there is a significant need to offer training if schools do get on

board with the initiative. Based on her conversations with area schools, Sandra shared that March 19th is being looked at as a possible workshop day for teachers in grades 7-12 to focus on technology by level. A legislative meeting is being held in Augusta about The laptop initiative on Wednesday, April 15th from 2:30-4:30PM.

Beth asked if anyone had heard of Study Island. It is a web-based program that offers lessons and assessments that are aligned to the NECAP. More information can be found at www.studyisland.com/NH.

Sandra asked the group about strategies being used to meet varying student needs. Deb offered a model that she has seen work well at the K-1 level. Those teachers work in homogenous groups for literacy instruction and the literacy specialist works with the most at-risk groups. The students shift groups frequently depending on their needs. Donna mentioned an initiative that is occurring at her school as well. ALEKS was mentioned as a web-based math program that is being used by a number of systems to support struggling learners as well as those who excel and need additional challenges.

A question was raised about the Math Recovery program. There was no clear sense as to where this initiative currently stands.

Pam Kimball noted that she is continuing to schedule times to meet with curriculum coordinators regarding the teacher prep initiative. She is currently working on a number of possibilities around the use of technology to provide University students with additional opportunities to have classroom experiences including virtual ones.

Next Agenda-

Meeting to begin at 10:00AM (This may change depending on what Mary finds out about a presentation by representatives from the Yarmouth School Department.)

Old Business

- Updates from Owen (professional development offerings for next year)
- State Updates
- MCLA Updates
- Literacy Cohort Update
- Virtual high school update

New Business

- Possible presentation about RtI from representatives of the Yarmouth School Department
- Summer meeting date
- Other business

