



Strategic Interventions for Student Success

U. S. Department of Education, Smaller Learning Communities Program

April 25–27, 2012

Washington, DC

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

PLENARY SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25TH

Response to Intervention: What It Is and How We Do It?

Presenters: *Michele Tisiere and Carol Miller Lieber*, ESR

Location: Globe Theater

The aim of this session is to develop some shared understandings among participants about the RTI framework as it applies to high schools with small learning communities. Participants will gain a more comprehensive understanding of three tiers of instructional and academic supports and interventions and multiple platforms for implementing these supports and interventions—in the classroom, within small learning communities, and through school-wide initiatives. Teams will have an opportunity to assess the current status of their RTI initiatives and begin thinking about practices that they want to stop, start, deepen, or change.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26TH

Leading the Way with Small Learning Communities

Presenter: *Nancy Golden*, Superintendent, Springfield Public Schools (OR)

Location: Academy Hall

Meeting the needs of all students requires us to have a set of core leadership skills. In this session you will learn a number of these skills, essential for turning aspirations into results. Dr. Golden will share how these skills have been implemented in the Springfield School District and how you can use them in your district to ensure the success of your small learning communities. You will leave this session with concrete strategies to use immediately!

FRIDAY, APRIL 27TH

See Poverty...Be The Difference: Concrete Tools For Improving Education Outcomes

Presenter: *Donna Beegle*, President, Communication Across Barriers

Location: Academy Hall

Students living in poverty and coping with its impact on daily life are the least likely to receive an education. In this groundbreaking session, Dr. Beegle, who grew up in the deepest poverty in America, provides a new paradigm and concrete tools for breaking poverty barriers to learning. Participants gain practical, proven strategies from an “insider perspective,” on how we can improve educational outcomes for students who live in poverty.

WORK SESSIONS – THURSDAY, APRIL 26TH

MORNING WORK SESSIONS 4/26

#1: A Critical Tier 1 Classroom Support and Intervention: Academic Conferencing

Presenters: *Michele Tisiere and Carol Miller Lieber*, ESR

Location: Vista Rooms A-B

Participants will explore conferencing as a key structure for supporting engagement and academic achievement. The importance of academic conferencing is captured by Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (2005) in *Best Practices* when they wrote, “a one-minute private conversation with a student, timed at just the right moment and targeted precisely to that kid’s own work, is often more effective than hours of whole-class instruction.” This session will address the ways in which conferences support students to become active, responsible, self-directed, and self-evaluating learners. Participants will learn:

- Conferencing as a universal support
- Goals and structures for conferencing
- The impact of academic conferencing on achievement
- Why conferences are not part of the mainstream
- Communication skills essential to successful conferencing

#2: Increasing Teacher Capacity at the Intersection of Culture, Learning and Instruction

Presenter: *Deborah Childs-Bowen*, Alliance for Leadership in Education

Location: Vista Room C

The research is clear; teachers have the greatest influence on student’s success with academic content, second only to educational leaders. Given this premise, what do all educators need to know and do to help students meet 21st century learning outcomes? What strategic instructional interventions are readily accessible to educators? How can educators function collaboratively in a supportive learning environment? How can educators leverage socio-cultural influences, the process of learning, and strategic instruction to yield equitable outcomes for all students? This work session will explore these essential questions and provide opportunities to plan for future success school-wide.

#3: Going Far Together: Strategic Interventions through Community Collaboration

Presenters: *Nettie Legters*, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University; *Thomas Acampora*, Diplomas Now/Talent Development, Johns Hopkins University; *Deon Toon*, Communities in Schools.

Location: Balcony Room D

Partnerships with community-based organizations can provide schools with extraordinary capacity to intervene effectively with students who are falling off the graduation path. Partnerships also can be difficult to establish, coordinate, manage, and sustain. This interactive working session features the Diplomas Now model—a federally funded innovation that links school teams and community partners in a coordinated approach to providing the right student with the right intervention at the right time. Participants will use this model, other resources, and

their own experiences as launching points for clarifying and strengthening their strategies for collaborating with community organizations. (Session repeated in afternoon)

#4: Literacy for Success in all Content Areas (including Math!)

Presenter: *Terry Salinger*, American Institutes for Research (AIR)

Location: Balcony Room B

The Common Core State Standards provide clear and strong evidence of the importance of literacy skills for success in all content areas and in college-and-career readiness. Yet, this is not a new idea, either in school, research, or policy settings. Most secondary teachers can remember attending at least one “reading in the content area” professional development session; the 6–12 CCSS present standards for literacy in literature, social studies/history, and science; and important entities like the National High School Center advocate for “academic literacy.” This working session will share research about what seems to get best results and explore what all these ideas mean for secondary teachers, including those who teach mathematics. Combining discussion and hands-on activities, participants will explore questions such as: How can teachers best choose interventions? How should teachers begin to modify their already strong instructional practices? And, why should they make any modifications? (Session repeated in afternoon)

#5: Meaningful Inclusion: SLC Access and Equity for ELL Students

Presenters: *Pamela Seki and Nader Twal*, Long Beach Unified School District

Location: Balcony Room C

In implementing SLCs, it is critical to create systems and conditions that support the tiered inclusion of English Learners. For authentic access, students must have a legitimate point of entry into the most rigorous course of study; to achieve equity, the outcomes must be substantial. In this session, Long Beach Unified staff will share their approach to redesigning the EL curriculum to support inclusion of students in SLCs. Presenters will share the challenges of meaningful inclusion, with the strategies that are making it increasingly possible.

AFTERNOON WORK SESSIONS 4/26

#6: Meeting Students' Academic Needs beyond the Classroom: Tier II Intervention Strategies

Presenters: *Michele Tisiere and Carol Miller Lieber*, ESR

Location: Vista Rooms A–B

In *Pyramid Response to Intervention*, Buffum (2009) stated “intervention is most effective when the interventions are timely, structured, and mandatory; focused on the *cause* of a student's struggles rather than on a symptom; and part of a system that guarantees that these practices apply no matter which teacher a student is assigned to.” Participants of this session will learn the key features of effective, equitable, and systemic academic learning supports and interventions and the “how-tos” for developing, implementing, and sustaining these practices. Participants will explore two platforms of interventions beyond the classroom: (1) SLC, grade-level, and department supports and interventions and (2) school-wide supports and interventions developed by an early warning/academic support team.

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#9: “Data-Driven Decisions”: Fantastic or Farce?

Presenters: *Eric Backman and Scot Wigert*, Casa Grande High School, Petaluma CA

Location: Vista Room C

Educators frequently insist on the importance of making “data-driven decisions,” particularly when schools are engaged in reform. However, the very data used to drive school change often create confusion and even obstruction. What factors determine whether or not data will inspire positive change? This presentation will explore the use of student achievement data at Casa Grande High School during the years 2008–2012. With a focus on actual data sets used during the implementation years of Casa’s SLCs, the presenters will share lessons about data and ways to analyze, organize, and present them to staff in compelling ways that guide decisions about curriculum and interventions. Participants will review Casa Grande’s new school-wide report card, which includes a continuum of data beginning with incoming eighth graders and ending with post-secondary achievement data. Using criteria developed by the presenters to produce effective data, participants will envision a school-wide report card for their own school sites.

#10: Meaningful Inclusion: SLC Access and Equity for Special Education Students

Presenters: *Joanne Murphy and Nader Twal*, Long Beach Unified School District

Location: Balcony Room C

In any reform, it is critical to create systems and conditions that support the tiered inclusion of special education students. For authentic access, students must have a legitimate point of entry into the most rigorous course of study; to achieve equity, the outcomes must be substantial. In this session, Long Beach Unified staff will share their approach to support a sustainable model of tiered inclusion driven by collaboration, feasible restructuring and student choice. Presenters will share how the system balances the will of stakeholders to define priorities for inclusion with the talent and skill of practitioners to define the process.