

CCSS Leadership Community of Practice
October 29, 2015

Connecticut Core Practices that Succeeded: A Practitioner's Perspective

What Connecticut Core practices, learned in previous sessions, have you implemented in your school or district?

- Not discussed, as this is the first session of the series.

As a result, what are you no longer doing?

- Not discussed, as this is the first session of the series.

What are three "best ideas" from each of the morning sessions?

- Focus on the kinds of professional development needed to develop and implement CCSS units of study, such as:
 - Unwrapping and interpreting CCSS
 - Time for horizontal and vertical department planning
 - A vetting and revision process for units and their assessments
 - Systematic collaboration facilitated by the use of Google Docs, Survey Monkey and Poll Everywhere
 - An extensive professional development menu that includes all aspects of implementation
- The role of formative assessment in implementation of the CCSS
 - Pre-assessment to determine background knowledge
 - *Looking At Student Work* protocols used as an assessment tool
 - Developing rubrics for formative assessments
- Implementing instructional practices and strategies that are aligned to the CCSS
 - Resources, materials and units organized by standard rather than instructional timeline
 - Standards-based instruction that is monitored for consistency with professional development
 - Time allotted for targeted small group instruction based on formative assessment results
 - Parent communication strategies such as, "Show What You Know."

What did you learn from your colleagues today that you will bring back to your school or district?

- Looking at formative assessment, especially the use of pretests to help guide instruction.

- The schedule needs to be student-driven.

- **Scheduling, within our constraints, to build the capacity of teachers to do the work of implementing common core. Try to address habits of mind along with student-generated questioning. While maintaining what we have, work with the district to see if human resources can be allocated to make this more of a possibility.**
- **As a small district, everything is very integrated. We will start by looking at the schedule. Doing a lot of backfilling, so what will we do next year - teachers asking for more time to address gaps until they catch up. Get additional coaching onsite, conversations about assessment, standards, etc.**
- **The challenges are vastly different in different districts. Implementation is a function of the people with whom you work, how they see their jobs, and how much time they have to spend. Only having your own experience as a reference can cause you to be so introspective that you don't see things outside and leads to feeling hopeless. It is encouraging when you see other pathways and approaches. Professional development with other districts can be an "everybody wins" scenario.**
- **Partnerships with other districts must be done with an administrative focus to galvanize everyone. The partnership has to be mutually beneficial to both districts. Partnerships allow you to have other people with whom you can share thoughts and frustrations. When it becomes an administrative initiative, it can be more successful. Communicate to the superintendent what is the desired result, come up with a plan that might be effective, and ask for help in implementing that plan. Come in as a team with a proposal and delineate what you would be willing to do. You can also connect with another district through document sharing.**
- **Voices from outside the district, such as consultants, can help your cause and this allows for a wider, more enlightened view.**
- **The interdisciplinary piece is important. We need to be making connections between those who teach the different disciplines, while building bridges through collaborative conversations in which everyone grows together. These conversations are key to the success of the Common Core and we must keep this in mind.**
- **Start in small, finite, attainable steps.**