

INSTRUCTION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Dear Staff Members,

The vision of the Instructional Team is to **Support Inspire, and Prepare** staff members to use high-quality instructional techniques, create positive school culture, provide intervention & enrichment opportunities, and utilize effective assessment practices to ensure student achievement.

We certainly hope you walked away from the ‘Schools of Excellence’ Conference feeling the energy, enthusiasm and positive intent that was put into organizing the conference. That same feeling will be carried over in everything the Instructional Department will do throughout this school year.

This year you will receive a monthly newsletter that will share professional development opportunities, research findings, tech tools to try, and other related matters to student achievement.

It’s going to be a great year focused on the success of each student, strengthening relationships with each other, and making a difference each day. We wish you well as you begin this new school year.

SOAR to new heights,

Dina Rocheleau, Tom Maes and Beth Grillo

**Instruction Department
Quick Calendar**

September 2014						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Sept 2: First Day of School
Sept 8: [First PLC Monday](#)
Sept 9: [An Introduction to John Hattie PD Session #1](#)
Sept 18: [PBIS PD Series #1](#)
Sept 22: [Culturally-Responsive Teaching PD Session 1](#)
Sept 23: [Intervention and Enrichment Session #1](#)

Review of Ferndale’s Schools of Excellence Conference

On August 25, when Ferndale’s teachers and staff returned after a well-deserved summer break, they experienced something a little different from previous years—the first-ever Schools of Excellence conference! Over the course of the two mornings, teachers had the opportunity to attend 17 different sessions presented by Ferndale Schools teachers and administrators and Oakland Schools consultants. Topics ranged from a roll-out of the new K-2 Word Study program to Formative Assessment practices, from “The Person of the Teacher” to standards-based grading. Additionally, teachers and staff were treated to a surprise visit from Ferndale’s Go Comedy! performers on Tuesday morning, a riveting keynote speaker from UHS teacher Dr. Eddie Connor, and welcome presentations from new Ferndale Superintendent Blake Prewitt, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Tom Shelton, and Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

“The session put on by Scott Collins was great and super helpful.”

Dina Rocheleau.

Take a look at some of the comments we received as feedback!

“I think it would be great to have more teachers lead breakout sessions.”

“After 23 years of teaching in Ferndale this was the most useful, uplifting, and motivating opening I have ever experienced. Thank you all for the hard work.”

Professional Learning Communities



“The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community.”
-Mibrey McLaughlin,

Professional

Who, those in the school/district who share a codified body of knowledge, who operate with a specific code of ethics, and who are certified to engage in the work of the profession (Teaching & Learning)

Learning

Why, the purpose is to enhance and extend the learning of the membership in order to be more effective in its work with students

Community

How, the membership of the particular group convenes itself, using democratic principles, for a specific and shared purpose

PLC is not a program, but an organized approach to allow educators to work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquire and action research to achieve better results for the students served.

- Collaboration is embedded in routine practices
- Time for collaboration is built into the school day and school calendar
- Products of collaboration are made explicit
- Team norms guide collaboration
- Teams pursue specific and measurable performance goals
- Teams focus on key questions associated with learning
- Data driven, academic priorities
- Goals that are measurable and tied to an assessment
- Teamwork that produces short term assessment results
- Anchored by a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- Teams have access to relevant information

Big ideas behind the PLC, Early Release Mondays:

- Mutual accountability
- Dialogue at the team level to collectively and systematically enhance professional practices
- Results oriented mindset, not one of ‘intentions’
- Be clear & ‘Hungry’ for evidence

Four key GUIDING Questions:

- What is it we want students to learn for this unit?
- How will we know each student has learned?
- How will we respond when they don’t learn?
- What will we do if they already know lesson outcomes?

What Makes Learning Communities Successful?

- Data driven, academic priorities
- Goals that are measurable and tied to an assessment
- Teamwork that produces short term assessment results
- Anchored by a guaranteed and viable curriculum

Professional Learning Communities will be organized at each building based on grade level or content area.

Presenting...Ferndale Professional Development!

We are so excited to be able to offer Ferndale teachers and staff Professional Development this year! What better way to celebrate the amazing wealth of experience and expertise in our district than to share it with each other in order to positively affect student achievement?

See the information below to read more about our Semester 1 offerings. **You can sign up for each by clicking the strategies icons below**, or by visiting ferndaleinstruction.weebly.com.

Quick Facts About Ferndale PD

- All PD is held at the Harding Administration Center (2920 Burdette), Room 4
- There are 3 sessions in a series, and all sessions run from 4:00-6:00 PM
- Snacks will be provided!
- SCECHs are available for teachers who attend all 3 sessions within a series
- Attending all 3 sessions in a series satisfies 6 of the district's required additional PD hours

High-Quality Instruction: An Introduction to John Hattie



Become acquainted with the work of John Hattie, an education researcher who combined over 50,000 studies of student achievement and determined what influences help students learn! In this series, we will delve into his extensive body of work, and you will work with your colleagues to tweak your practice to enhance your students' achievement.

Dates: September 9, October 7, and November 11 (all Tuesdays)

School Culture: Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)



PBIS is an district-wide initiative in Ferndale this year! The goal of PBIS is provide students with positive reinforcements and encouragement in order to increase achievement, decrease disciplinary issues, and increase school safety. Come to this PD to learn about research-based, school- and classroom-based techniques that you can implement in your classes.

*You can get a stipend for attending this PD!!!

Dates: September 18, October 16, and November 20 (All Thursdays)

School Culture: Culturally-Responsive Teaching with Dr. Jay Marks



This interactive professional learning series will provide participants with an opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to teach and provide support for the education of students who are identified as ethnically diverse.

Participants will be provided with research-based instructional strategies that can be used to improve the educational outcomes of diverse learners.

Dates: September 22, October 27, November 24, December 15, and January 26 (All Mondays)

Intervention and Enrichment: Extending Your Curricular Reach Using Technology



Each session, you will learn how to use a new tech tool in order to provide your students with more opportunity to interact with your classroom. Attend all 3 to learn about a variety of options and choose the one that best works for you.

Dates and Topics (All Thursdays):
September 23: Weebly Website Creation
October 21: Moodle Refresher
November 25: Edmodo, The Educational Facebook

Instructional Department Updates:

1. Administrators will be meeting with NWEA consultants at the beginning of September. All professional development related to NWEA will be embedded into building staff meetings. NWEA updates will be provided on our monthly newsletter throughout the school year.
2. All students in Ferndale will be afforded the opportunity to use Study Island at school and home. Study Island can be used as an intervention for selected students who need additional time in reading and/or math. Study Island can also be used as an enrichment for students who are already meeting with success, but need further challenges to expand their thinking. Information about Study Island will be forthcoming within the next few weeks.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

Here are the weekly character quotes for the month of September. We would love to hear how you are using the quote in your classroom or setting. Please send us an email so we can share with others!

September 2	The time is always right to do what is right.	Martin Luther King, Jr.
September 8	Be true to your work, your word, and your friend.	Henry David Thoreau
September 15	A true hero isn't measured by the size of his strength, but by the	Hercules
September 22	You will never know unless you try.	Disney
September 29	Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.	Mark Twain

Each building has received posters with our Pre-K to 12 behavior expectations. **SOAR posters should be easily viewed around each building and in each classroom.** Each school will develop the behavior matrix for the SOAR expectations. Each school will design systems for positive acknowledgement and reinforcement as a universal strategy, systems should be established within the school to ensure that all students receive positive acknowledgement for demonstrating the high priority behaviors established in the expectations matrix. Think of reward systems on a continuum, beginning with positive teacher attention, moving to visual or written acknowledgements, then to more concrete systems if/when necessary.

The golden rule:

Students won't know how much you know until they know how much you care.

Developing true relationships is key to everything!