

PONUS RIDGE AND WEST ROCKS VANGUARD PARTNERSHIP

USING THE VANGUARD PARTNERSHIP TO DRIVE
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Presented by

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Presentation Outline

- Introductions
- Partnership Background
- NPS Initiatives
- CALI Implementation Requirements
- Changes for Norwalk Public Schools
- Our Partnership ~ Goals, Expectations and Design
- Challenges
- Successes



THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How can partner schools collaborate to share Best Practices to support academic success for all students and simultaneously explore the links between data collection and instructional practices?



Partnership Background

- Collaboration between Ponus Ridge and West Rocks goes back to 1999. West Rocks was part of a CSR grant and shared professional development activities with Ponus Ridge. In 2005, Ponus Ridge received a CSR grant and invited West Rocks math teachers to participate in PIMMS (The Project to Increase Mastery in Math and Science) professional development activities with Ponus Ridge math teachers.
- Many commonalities exist among the two schools:

Commonalities

- Both schools had students performing below proficient in math and reading
- Both schools developed school improvement plans
- Both schools used the Readers and Writers Workshop model for Language Arts instruction
- Both schools developed a motivational focus to foster positive school climate and academic achievement -P.R.I.D.E. and R.E.A.C.H.
- Both schools jointly addressed improving test scores through staff development

NPS Initiatives

An NCLB designation as a school district in Year 4-In need of Improvement and CSDE intervention, resulted in the following initiatives in August 2008:

- Data Driven Decision-making
- Data Teams
- Making Standards Work
- Research Based Instructional Strategies
- Common Formative Assessments
- Developing District Benchmarks
- Curricula Development
- Differentiated Instruction
- Professional Learning Communities (Collaborative Teams)

Elements of C.A.L.I.

- **Data Driven Decision Making** - student performance and other data to assist in the instructional decisions that must be made to ensure **high levels of student achievement for all**
- Examples:
 - CMT and CAPT data
 - Formative assessment results
 - Benchmark assessment results
 - Other data determined by data teams and teachers to be useful in informing instructional decisions

Elements of CALI

- **Power Standards**- standards that endure throughout a student's academic and professional life
- Example: Students will be proficient in creating graphs, tables, and charts and will be able to draw accurate inferences from them
- Our Task: Identify the power standards across all curricula for every grades curricula

Elements of CALI

- **District and School Data Teams**-staff members who are responsible for examining student performance and other data to assist in the instructional decisions that must be made to ensure high levels of achievement for all students
- Our Task: Develop teams at the district and school levels

Elements of CALI

- **Unwrapped Power Standards** – the concepts, skills, big ideas and essential questions by grade level, and content area connected to the standards that are critical for all students to master
- Our Task: Unwrap the power standards by grade level and content area

Elements of CALI

- **Common Formative Assessments** - these enable teachers and students to have a clear understanding of where students are in their learning. This information may inform decisions about re-teaching, additional assistance or additional study required by students
- Our Task: Develop common formative assessments by grade level in all areas

Elements of CALI

- **Effective Teaching Strategies** - strategies that are proven, based on research, to have a significant impact on student learning
- The CALI model identifies nine strategies identified by Marzano & Reeves
- *CRISS* strategies - student strategies for controlling their own learning through techniques that can be used in all content areas

Elements of CALI

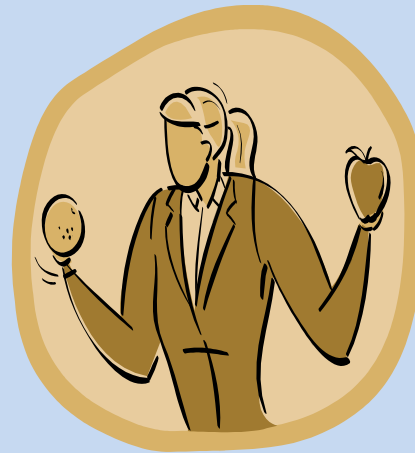
- **Common Post Assessments** - those summative assessments that are given on a periodic basis to identify what learning has taken place
- Staff will use this data to refine and examine the success of school and district goals related to student achievement

What is different?

- The District Improvement Plan serves as the foundation for the development of all School Growth Plans
- Each school in our district is required to establish a Building Data Team
- There is consistency in the district focus goals, professional development workshops and use of research based instructional strategies
- All plans are written for a 3 year implementation period

What is different?

- District DDDMT's review plans and provide feedback on School Growth Plans to Building Data Teams
- Frequent monitoring of School Growth Plans resulting in “fidelity” to the work
- Teachers see their work as “connected” rather than an “add on”



Partnership Goals, Expectations and Design

Partnership Goals

- Collaboratively share best practices in order to meet common academic challenges at Ponus and West Rocks.
- Collaboratively explore, share, and practice the use of differentiated instruction as an instructional strategy to address the needs of all students
- To collaboratively explore the links between data collection and instructional practices using the data team process as indicated in the District and School Improvement Plan

Partnership Expectations

- Planning meetings with the principals and SERC
- Planning meetings with the staff, principals, and SERC
- Establish School Leadership Team (required by the District)
 - Team and Subject Leaders; Math and Literacy teachers
- Development of Partnership Map for each year
- Staff completes Vanguard self-evaluation
 - Clear and Common Focus
 - High Standards and Expectations
 - Supportive, Personalized, and Relevant Learning Environment
 - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
 - Time and Structure
 - Strong Leadership
 - Parent/Community Involvement and Collaboration
 - Frequent Monitoring
 - Professional Development

Partnership Expectations (cont'd.)

- Make use of all days of SERC consultant service
- Connect all of the work to the district's initiatives, School Growth Plan
- Organizing the details for staff development in collaboration with Vanguard School
 - Write the district required CEU staff development proposals
 - Teachers make substitute arrangements
 - Keep the flow of information with staff and appropriate district administrators
 - Involve district administrators
 - Order food, other items for hospitable work sessions
 - Exchange email to manage projects
 - Arrange for space to conduct sessions
 - Utilize \$5,000 for substitute teacher payments
 - Develop monitoring notes for School Growth Plan as related to Vanguard
 - Arrange for 2 staffs to work together at district-wide staff development days
 - Provide engaging activities for district-wide staff development days
 - Anything else that was required

Partnership Design

- Since September 2007 Ponus Ridge and West Rocks staff members have followed a professional development design that has afforded them the opportunity to:
 - Participate in three (3) joint building professional development sessions on Data Teams and CFA's
 - Participate in four (4) Data Team sessions for leadership cadre
 - Participate in Differentiated Instruction sessions (Social Studies teachers)
 - Planning and facilitation of building professional development activities by the leadership cadre

Year 1 Professional Development Vanguard Plan for 2007-08

- **June, 2007**
 - Notification of Partnership award
- **November, 2007**
 - Meet with SERC consultants and small committees—both schools
- Solicit Input---What will we work on?
- **November, 2007**
- Staff to Complete the Self-Assessment on Components of Effective Schools
- **November & December 2007**
- Principals Develop Partnership Map with SERC Consultants

Goals:

- To collaboratively share Best Practices in order to meet common academic challenges at Ponus and West Rocks
- To collaboratively explore, share, and practice the use of differentiated instruction as an instructional strategy to address the needs of all students
- To collaboratively explore the links between data collection and instructional practices using the data team process as indicated in the District and School Improvement Plan

Year 1 Professional Development (cont'd.)

- ***March 28, 2008**
- Staff Development Day both schools
- Introduction of Data Team Work, SERC
- ***April 29, 2008**
- Differentiated Instruction for Social Studies Teachers—Both Schools, SERC
- ***May 12, & 19, 2008**
- Classroom modeling (Differentiated Instruction, Learning Styles), Joan Glass, Instructional Specialist, modeling at both schools
- ***April 28, May 5 & 19, 2008**
- Social Studies teachers meet during faculty meetings to prepare for classroom modeling and to debrief, Joan Glass, Instructional Specialist
- ***June, 2008**
- Plan for 2008-09 with SERC consultants

Year 2 Professional Development Vanguard Plan for 2008 - 2009

- ***October, 14, 2008**
 - Data Teams for both schools receive professional development on operation of Data Teams, SERC
- ***October 29, 2008**
 - Assist data teams to develop plan to provide staff development to both staffs on November 4, 2008 on operation of data teams, SERC
- ***November 4, 2008**
 - District-wide professional development for both schools on the Data Team process
- ***November 18, 2008**
 - Social Studies teachers from both schools to receive second day of Differentiated Instruction, SERC
- ***December 3, 4, 2008**
 - Modeling of differentiated instruction, tiered instruction, Joan Glass, Instructional Specialist
- ***December 1, 8**
 - Social Studies teachers, both schools, to meet with Joan Glass at faculty meetings

Year 2 Professional Development (cont'd.)

- ***January 20, 2009**
 - Data Teams, professional development in creation of Data Walls, SERC
- ***January 29, 2009**
 - Data Teams, professional development on Common Formative Assessments, SERC
- ***March 27, 2009**
 - District professional development day, both schools with Vanguard Consultants, Common Formative Assessments, SERC

Challenges

- Organizing the details for professional development in collaboration with our Vanguard School
 - Write the district required CEU staff development proposals
 - Teachers make substitute arrangements
 - Arrange for space to conduct sessions
 - Order food, other items for hospitable work sessions
- Keep the flow of information with staff and appropriate district administrators
- Involve Central Office Administrators and instructional Specialists

Challenges (cont'd.)

- Exchanging e-mail to manage projects
- Utilize \$5,000 for substitute teacher payments
- Develop monitoring notes for School Growth Plan as related to Vanguard
- Arrange for 2 staffs to work together at district-wide professional development days
- Provide engaging activities for district-wide professional development days
- Effectively articulate the CALI and SGP to our parent body and community stakeholders
- Anything else that was required

Successes

- Our partnership affords us a unique opportunity to examine common issues, provide examples of success with particular strategies as well as challenges as we address student achievement
- Teachers and administrators have built in opportunities to examine, chart and analyze data in order to plan meaningful lessons
- The leadership teams from both schools are pivotal players in shaping aspects of the partnership focus.
- There are numerous opportunities to build capacity among the faculty
- Evidence of student improvement in 2008 CMT's. Both schools achieved a Safe Harbor designation.