

## #1 UTUBE: Cardinal Choir - "Stand By Me"

### I. Who are we? (Sarah)

**#2 PPE: "Signals" PPE #1** Hello, everyone and welcome. We are the talking heads of Dodge City Middle School in Dodge City, Kansas. We say that because the evolution of our school from one that was all but broken to one that now leads the way to success for all the students that attend there was accomplished by a sizeable group of intelligent, driven, frustrated, determined, focused and flexible instructors. We are but a small sampling of that group of people. We were asked to speak for them. And so we do.

How many of you are middle school people? Let's have a show of hands. Ok, now you will understand this completely and we will gently lead the high school people along. You must change gears or create a disturbance about every 6-10 minutes in order to keep a middle school person on task. This is true of students and staff alike. **PPE #2** (Pam yelling "squirrel!") So therefore you will be expected to be part of this showcase. **PPE #3** Prompts will appear on the screen that will give you your scripted portion of the presentation.

Our team includes: Linda Holeman who teaches speech and drama at our school, Lisa Pelton, one of our science teachers, I am Sarah Schaeffer, the media specialist at our school or librarian if you choose. Two of our three building administrators are with us. Pam Algrim is our assistant principal and Mike King is our principal. **PPE #4** (...applause sign)

**PPE #5** Dodge City Middle School is located in the SW Kansas town of **PPE #6** Dodge City.....everyone say.... **PPE #7** ....duh!

**PPE #8** We are the county seat of Ford county with a population of 27,340. Our Hispanic population in the city is now 57.5% and 2.7% are African American.

**PPE #9** Meat packing is the primary industry in Dodge City. Cargill Meat Solutions and National Beef both operate large facilities in the city. The city also hosts farm implement

manufacturing and serves as a supply center for area agriculture. **PPE #10** Livestock-raising **PPE #11** is a major activity while wheat and sorghum **PPE #12** is the area's main crop.

In addition, a local tourism industry, including a **PPE #13** casino resort and **PPE #14** western museum has been developed to capitalize on Dodge City's history as an Old West cowtown. The service sector accounts for much of the rest of the local economy.

**PPE #15** The arts are alive and well in Ole Dodge City with a Carnegie library turned arts council, a local arts consortium and a thriving community theater company.

The Dodge City School district is composed of nine **PPE #16-17** K-5 elementary schools, **PPE #18** one 9-12 high school and two middle schools. **PPE #19, 20, 21, 22** Our home is Dodge City Middle School. **PPE #23** Comanche middle school opened this fall after a reorganization plan that created two 6-8 middle schools, thus eliminating one educational transition for our students. We look forward to many years of collaboration with our new sister school. Dodge has one **PPE #24** parochial school that serves students from K-8 grade and we also have a two year community college that serves as a connection to our state university system.

**PPE #25** Dodge City Middle School itself serves students in grades 6-8. Our student population this year stands at 675 with 216 6<sup>th</sup> graders, 228 7<sup>th</sup> graders and 231 8<sup>th</sup> graders. We could certainly be called a low SES school with 85% of our student body on free and reduced lunch. 81% of our students are Hispanic and 58% of our kids are deemed ELL students with English as their second language at school and home. We have 17 students in our building that are in our Newcomers program, in which their focus is concentrated language acquisition to prepare them for main stream learning. We also have 180 students that require special education services, with 52 of those in the gifted services program.

**PPE #26** Each grade level has two interdisciplinary teams with a math, science, social studies and ELA teacher on each. Students also have a computer application class that alternates with a physical education class.

**PPE #27, 28, 29, 30** Exploratory classes are an integral part of the middle school experience for students and we offer a wide range of courses. From band, orchestra and vocal music, we also include visual arts, speech and drama, creative writing, math problem solving, life skills, industrial technology, strength and conditioning and health classes.

**PPE #31** After many arduous hours of planning, a schedule that we believe is just brilliant was developed last spring and serves the needs of our students. **PPE #32, 33** It is a flex schedule and we have included a copy of that schedule and adapted schedules for various dismissal times in your handouts. If you would like to discuss it further, we would be glad to do so at the round table event. If you have ever been involved in developing a master schedule for a school you understand that is a whole session in and of itself. **PPE #34** We call Mrs. Algrim the Lemonade Queen. She can make any schedule work.

## **2. Where were we?** *(Lisa)*

### **#3 ANIMOTO: “Where were we?”**

As previously stated, our district’s demographics were, and still are today, often seen as one of the primary challenges of our district. Remember, we are representing a district with 83% of kids on free and reduced lunch 58% of students claiming English as a second language. Many of our students do not have the adequate support coming from home. Often, parents and guardians are doing the best they can with their own limited educational background. It is challenging for a parent with an eighth grade education and limited-English proficiency to assist their children with pre-algebra or language arts. It is also a challenge for parents who desire to provide the very best for their children, but lack either financial or technological resources necessary to meet the expectations of today’s educational system. Some parents are not sure where to begin the search for needed resources. Other parents choose, for cultural reasons, not to seek assistance which may be available. As we all know, we cannot change our classroom or district

demographics. We can however, partner with families and help students rise to the top instilling confidence in them through our constant encouragement.

In addition to the demographic challenges we faced, we looked back at the history of DCMS and identified three key factors which led to some of our rockiest years; constant administrative change, lack of teacher leadership due to that change and an unsafe school environment. We often felt as though we were the “ugly stepchild” of the school district. There was no pride, no unity and sadly no light at the end of the tunnel. It was constant turmoil. We had a bad reputation and the community was well aware of our bad reputation. Parents were so afraid of our school; many opted to have their children attend the local private-Catholic school; others chose to drive their children to neighboring districts – all in an attempt to avoid the disorganization and chaotic reputation of our building.

In a seven year time span, we had five different head principals. Each principal had their own philosophies, their own ways of working with staff and students and their own agendas. Most of them “wanted” to do what was best for our students, but to be honest, they were unable to accomplish any of their goals in such a short time. But let’s take a moment to let our staff tell you the story of where we were. **#4 UTUBE: “Where were we?”**

### **#5 PPE: Hot Point Statements**

**PPE #1** This lack of leadership in the office and classrooms was a perfect set-up for an unsafe school environment both physically and emotionally. For years, the building administration was in denial about our growing gang problems. The most common mantra was, “if you don’t talk about the gang problems, then the gang problems won’t exist.” This motto however, did more damage than one would imagine. Our students knew there was a lack of discipline and ran with it. Students would intimidate, bully and start fights anywhere. Students and faculty feared violence in the building. Students would walk in fear through the hallways hoping to not be bullied or get mixed-up in someone else’s fight. We were trying to teach and help these young people, grow and develop them into smart, confident, productive citizens. The problem however was we could not get our building to rise above the second fundamental step in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs **PPE #2** – SAFETY!!

As a staff we finally hit “rock bottom” **PPE #3** (Slide - “Not an Easy Road”) and we knew a change was needed. We knew that what we were doing wasn’t working; we weren’t improving, we weren’t helping students learn and grow, our reputation as a building wasn’t getting better and we wanted to change. It took the right administration and a dedicated staff who were willing to step up and do the right thing to make the change happen. It hasn’t been an easy road, but together we have made great strides and made a difference in the lives of our students, their families and our community. We are grateful for this opportunity to share our story with you.

### **3. How did we change our school’s environment?** (Pam)

Ben Hamilton, one of our former students, who is now teaching in our building speaks about the gang problems then and now. **#6 UTUBE: Ben**

**#7 PPE: Gang Plan** **PPE #1** (JFK Quote Slide) Building a culture of safety for our students has to be first and foremost. We believe that providing a **PPE #2** safe environment sets the foundation for a well-established sanctuary of learning. And ... a few short years ago after being given the opportunity, we developed a very **PPE #3** focused gang intervention program for our school. With the collaboration of the local law enforcement agencies, a plan was implemented in December of 2008. This plan has had a major impact on our school and on the community and ... gang-related incidences have all but disappeared.

Our **PPE #4** purpose was straightforward: We care about our students and we are serious about prohibiting the activities of gangs and other organizations that engage in unlawful behavior in Dodge City Middle School. We do not tolerate behaviors or actions that are a threat to the safety, security and learning environment that we have worked hard to develop in our school. As a result of this thinking the DCMS Proactive Gang Plan was created and several prevention and intervention procedures were put into place that apply to all students in Dodge City Middle School.

The plan was **PPE #5** twofold. With the **PPE #6** prevention piece, the purpose was to create the influence that our students needed to have in order to get them involved in school activities

and athletics later on in their school careers. Preventions included separate student and staff gang awareness trainings, **PPE #7** Project GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training), and the 8 Week Choices Early Prevention Program to name a few.

The **PPE #8** interventions also included students being placed on gang-related behavior contracts due to gang-related referrals from the previous year, a gang database shared with local law enforcement through the School Resource Officer, bi-monthly at first and then monthly, mandatory Parent Education and Training Meetings conducted by Dodge City Police Department at the school as well as home visits by Dodge City Police Department for parents who were not in attendance at those required trainings.

Going into this, we knew we faced many challenges especially with the bi-monthly/monthly **PPE #9** parent trainings, but we were prepared. Students who were written up for gang-related offenses were required to attend these meetings with a parent. Babysitting services were made available with numerous parent contacts made, including home visits, prior to those meetings. Parents and students alike understood that we were very serious about changing our school's culture. **#8 UTUBE: Gang Plan**

**#9 PREZI: Gang Plan Stats** | This was quite an eye-opener for parents as many came to the realization that there really was a problem and they now had the resources to help them. The school soon became the place that parents could now ask for and receive help without judgment. Students also understood that it was no longer cool to tag restrooms, fight over colors, throw gang signs and "talk smack" to each other.

As you can see, the intervention data speaks for itself. We have made vast improvements in this area and included in your folder is a copy of our focused Gang Plan.

There also appears to be a direct correlation between the decrease in gang-related behaviors and acts of violence. We have seen an 83% decrease in acts of violence in our building since the plan was implemented. Together, the school and local law enforcement agencies have worked collaboratively to watch this "seed" grow from the ground up.

Students, parents and community know that Dodge City Middle School will not tolerate these kinds of behaviors and the end result is a school that focuses on learning and not on bad behavior. And ... as a result the community's perception of the school has changed dramatically for the better. Parents now believe that our school is a great place to send their children and are rushing to get them here from smaller area towns as well as the parochial school.

#### **4. What was the turning point?**

- *Are we a Junior High or a middle school? (Sarah)*
- *The drive to re-define ourselves (Sarah)*
- *Survey (Sarah)*
- *NMSA consultants (Sarah)*

#### **#10 PPE: Turning Points** **PPE #1** (Phoenix image)

We like to compare ourselves to the Phoenix. Rising from the ashes to fly again. Make no mistake, there was teaching and learning going on at our school before the fall of 2009. But a major change was about to happen. Leadership had always been top down. Very early in that year, within the first two weeks, Mr. King called for an after school meeting of anyone who would be interested in creating a professional development plan for our school. A lot of people showed up, wondering what this was all about.

That day the questions were asked, **PPE #2** “What do you want to be?” “How do you see this school?” “Are we a Junior High or a Middle School?” Again, we looked around to see if we were actually being asked our opinion and sure enough we were. The overwhelming response was that we wanted to concentrate our efforts at defining ourselves as a middle school. The name had been on the front of the building for years but time, effort and money had never been allotted to establish a working plan to institute all of the tenants of an exemplary middle school. That's what we wanted.

To our amazement the response was, “Fine, what do we need to do first?” There were people there with middle school background and others that had only departmental teaching experience.

But we needed a well thought out plan of action if we expected upper administration to pay the bill. The most obvious course of action would be to contact the National Middle School Association and elicit their help.

We started with a school wide book study of **PPE #3** “This We Believe.” Every staff member got a copy and we read and discussed it in team meetings.

With a good understanding of what we should look like we needed to find out where we actually stood in comparison to the model. Every staff member, administrator, our superintendent of school and couple of school board members took the **PPE #4** NMSA toolkit survey. If you have every taken that survey you know that it is comprehensive and the results gave us clear picture of who we were and set us on the path to a truly individualized professional development plan.

With the results of the survey in hand, we contacted NMSA again. What we needed was a cheerleader, someone to reinforce our career decision to work at the middle level of education and to begin the process of creating effective interdisciplinary teams that focus on the adolescent learner. We got the right person for the job and Jack Berkemeyer became a part of our DCMS family. **#11 UTUBE: Jack on Teaming** Jack was with us twice, the first time to get us fired up and thinking as teams and the second time he worked with individual teams on team strategies and interdisciplinary units of study.

- *In-house professional development (Pam)*

## **#12 ANIMOTO: Professional Development**

We believe in professional development that is relevant to the stakeholders. And so ... the results of that survey along with the recommendations made by the association have driven our professional development opportunities.

We have stepped up and taken the lead in developing in-house professional development and an action plan that suits the needs of our building, its staff and its students. Middle level educators

are very serious about their job, but understand that they can rarely be serious about themselves. After all ... we are middle level educators.

One of our favorite professional development days featured “The Production of Highly Engaging Strategies.” Teachers spent the morning with their Production Companies, aka focus groups, in workshops designed around the different intelligences: verbal/linguistic, kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal and musical/rhythmic.

The presenters/experts were teachers within the building. Chairmen of the Board, aka facilitators, worked with their groups to create final productions that were presented to all staff at the “Opening Night – Academy Awards.”

**#13 PPE: Literacy Plan** **PPE #1** Reflecting upon our past success with conducting our own building professional development, the Building Leadership Team identified the direction we needed to take for our school.

Our latest professional development, now led by our building’s Literacy Committee, also known as PLC leaders, chose writing as our targeted literacy skill. **PPE #2** Our belief is that writing IS thinking and the committee has identified 7 components or sub-skills for all students to master in ALL content areas. Sub-skills were rank ordered and the committee chose different strategies or techniques that will be taught to ALL students in ALL contents. **PPE #3** We believe that we can’t leave it to chance, that success is by design. We also set a specific timeline of implementation and literacy training for the staff. **PPE #4** ALL staff are then trained by teacher experts within our building and any one of our multi-talented teachers can become a trainer. We believe that if we focus on the adults who teach our students and we all do it the same way, we will see great results in student learning. And because we now have the power of a strong culture, we are asking teachers to participate 100% at their level of understanding, realizing that other teachers will offer support within teams and trainings. It’s all about the accountability. **PPE #5** We are constantly talking about our building wide literacy plan, bringing it up in staff meetings, team meetings and so on. Teachers are given many opportunities to share out in teams and that information is then brought to the Literacy Planning

Committee. We do all of this for the basis of support which is what professional development is all about.

**PPE #6** Here is a look at our latest staff training called “Tweestation” with our **PPE #7** two Tweeter Twainers (i.e. a music teacher and a P.E. teacher) who taught our entire staff a simple writing strategy that was implemented in all contents. **PPE #8** As you can see we make training fun. After all we are middle level educators **PPE #9**... and together we have been able to put together professional development sessions that are right on target to address our students’ needs in a specialized yet entertaining manner.

- *Educational opportunities for students, STUCO, gifted, exploratory classes, Honor Society (Linda)*

**# 14 ANIMOTO: Educational Opportunities** As with all effective middle schools, we believe that education cannot happen in a vacuum. Dodge City Middle School believes that opportunities for student improvement go beyond the intended curriculum. To that end, we work diligently to give our students as many opportunities as possible. For example, our school has a very active Student Council that works closely with our building leadership team to improve the school and to work as a service organization for the community. We have a junior chapter of the National Honor Society for students to advance themselves. Our gifted education program offers specialized classes for students, Scholars bowl participants compete with neighboring schools for bragging rights.

Whenever possible, we have brought in outside events to entertain and enlighten our student body. Because of our low SES status, very often this will be the only opportunity our students will have to experience many of these events. Among these are Dennis Rogers, Spirit Dancer, Rapenzel, Rachel's challenge, Mad about Money (sponsored by one of our local banks), Author Ben Mikaelson spoke to the student body after a study of his book Spirit Bear, Sheltered Reality’s high intensity performance and encouragement to Never give up, every year we honor our Veterans with a very touching tribute, and we sponsor a very extensive career fair that

invites local business to share their expertise with our students. Education at Dodge City Middle School draws upon every resource we reach.

### *Student Leadership (Sarah)*

“The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born-that there is a genetic factor to leadership. That’s nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born.”  
Warren Bennis.

And we believe that our school. And we start with the kids. As a part of our in-house professional development, I went to Mrs. Weils, who was our drama instructor at the time and asked if she had a group of students that I could work with on a special project. She selected an 8<sup>th</sup> grade that was a typical cross section of middle school kids. We met with them and gave them the Association of Middle Level Educators major goals and 16 characteristics and asked them to translate these “learned” statements into kid language. We were stunned and thrilled by the result. We would like to share with you just a snippet of this very valuable professional training video. This is what happens when you give all the stakeholders in the school the ability to be leaders.

## **#15 UTUBE: 16 Characteristics**

### **5. How do we re-define leadership?**

- *Leadership growing from the inside (Lisa)*

## **#16 ANIMOTO: Redefining Leadership**

There are many styles of leadership that make this world go around. Books have been written, movies have been made, and great leaders have evolved giving us a glimpse into what leadership may look like. At Dodge City Middle School we have re-defined what leadership looks and feels like for our staff and students.

Leadership isn't about what someone above tells you to do, it isn't about who can speak louder or who can have the best idea. At Dodge City Middle School it is about trust. It is about being able to have the critical conversations while understanding that education isn't personal. In our building we believe in working with people's strengths and supporting their weaknesses. We are all in this together for the common good of our students.

All members of our staff have opportunities to serve in different leadership roles either on our academic teams or as representatives in other committees within the building or district. This allows opportunities for all staff to take on leadership roles. This shared leadership concept helps all staff feel that their voice is important that their ideas are appreciated in our building. All meetings are open to anyone who would like to be a part of the conversation which helps build the trust within the building.

In our building we have worked diligently to develop effective team practices that not only help the staff develop professionally but most importantly to benefit the students by creating a "family" atmosphere. Our teams have a common planning time 4 days a week with one day devoted to PLC.'s. Our teams focus on three different areas: student needs, integrating curriculum and professional development. Team leaders meet once a month with administration in focused dialogue centered on meeting the needs for all students and staff. Administration facilitates this meeting providing us with the information and tools necessary to make our staff to be successful.

- *Establishing effective teaming practices (Lisa)*

Team leaders meet once a month with administration in focused dialogue centered on meeting the needs for all students. Administration facilitates this meeting to help empower us to become better leaders and provide us with the information and tools necessary to make our staff to be successful. This constant line of open communication helps all staff feel like they are heard and gives us an opportunity to talk about what is working and the areas that still need some fine-tuning.

- *PLC's (Lisa)*

The focus of our PLC leaders is to build literacy in all content areas. We believe if we are able to get kids to read and write more they will in turn become young people who think about and question everything around them. As you heard earlier, this focused literacy goal raises the bar for not only students but teachers as well. Our specific calendar helps to ensure that students are practicing their literacy strategies multiple times and hopefully in the end mastering the strategies. This is a plan we have recently begun and will continue to follow through next year and beyond.

- *Exploratory classes as teaching partners(Linda)*

### **#17 ANIMOTO: Exploratory Classes**

And ... now to talk about real life applications ... Exploratory classes are not “the specials” that fill out a school schedule; they are real life application of the core curriculum that give the students the ability to understand the why and how come of intended curriculum.

Our exploratory teachers work tirelessly to help the students connect the dots. Art classes not only teach technique but how it reflects cultures and history. Music classes teach collaboration and team work along with individual effort. Our industrial technology and life skills classes give hands on application to career based module learning. Speech and drama classes help the students with their communication skills. We also offer a wide range of health and physical education based courses.

Creative writing and Problem solving are the newest of our exploratory classes and serve as the entry into the building's iPad initiative. Students are creating their own self published books and creating public service announcements and promotional videos.

Middle level students are in the transitional phase of schooling and offering them a wide assortment of exploratory classes gives them an opportunity to understand more about the world beyond the standard classroom and the world of employment.

We could go on and on about our exploratory classes, but as you can see from the many images, our students are well on their way to becoming productive members of society who are digitally “plugged in.”

## **6. What was our next step?**

- *Advocacy/transitions (Sarah)*

### **#18 ANIMOTO: Introduction to Advocacy**

The advisory component of middle level education is a complicated process and one that schools often shy away from because “ We aren’t counselors.” We were no different. In the early years we had all sorts of versions of advisory...10 minute donut breaks in the morning, SMART time (school math and reading time) in the middle of the day...donuts and worksheets. And at one time we decided to “table the advisory component for a year to design a working model. Of course you know what that meant...we didn’t have advisory for about 4 years.

Our toolkit survey results told us that we were sorely lacking in this area. We spent the first two years getting teaming going and then we took it on. Again, we went back to NMSA and they sent us Neila Connor. Again, we hit the jackpot. **#19 UTUBE: Neila Connor**

This fall we instituted an advisory program that we believe supports the tenants of creating small units of advocacy for our students. Student groups are no more than 15. The advisory time is first thing in the morning, five days a week for a period of 19 minutes. With the assistance of one of our counselors, a group of teachers are planning activities for the advisors so that they are not left to their own devices, or donuts. We have initiated student-led conferences with relatively good results. Are we satisfied, of course not. But we are headed in the right direction, with the well-being of our students in mind. What more can you ask for.

## **7. Where are we headed?**

- *Expectations for every teacher – Learning Tools are changing (Mike)*
- *Investment of time - Digital Workspaces (Mike)*
- *Student-centered learning – Essential Characteristics (Mike)*

### **#20 PPE: Roadmap to Learning PPE #1**

Here are a few reflective questions; the same kind of questions that all schools will need to ask before they embark on changing their learning spaces. If digital learning is about how people connect, create, and collaborate, what does this mean for learning? And it is not just about learning but how student learning will occur in the future. Does this mean a change in pedagogy? A pedagogy that is student centered where perhaps the learners are in charge of designing their own learning plans.

Three years ago as a school we knew we had to prepare ourselves and students to enter a new era of digital learning spaces. This challenge was not so much based on rolling out technology but on the new learning environments that technology would create. Prior to our one to one initiative, we had to take time in the realignment of instructional practices. We also needed to create learning opportunities that were more hands on, experiential, project based, and aligned with student interest. These types of learning opportunities would offer students the chance to produce content, analyze information, and build deeper knowledge of complex topics.

### **PPE #2 These desires for needed change lead us to our essential questions:**

- (1) What kinds of engaged learning do we as a school see students doing with technology--- and more importantly,**
- (2) Will our school, as a whole be willing to view the student as the center of knowledge obtainment?**

The response to these questions is how our school went about defining student centered learning as we have set the course for mobile learning opportunities. In this presentation I will outline the three incremental steps on how we constructed a roadmap to student centered learning and digital spaces.

**PPE #3** *Providing expectations for every teacher by using technology*

- *Investing time in exposing teachers and students to mobile learning devices*
- *Defining the kinds of things that students will be doing with technology*

The first incremental step was *to provide expectations to use technology* by establishing a social network of shared ideas and resources. We became "tra-digital" as we moved from hard copies to digital artifacts of information sharing, collaboration, resource consumption and creation. Mobile learning devices were required for every teacher meeting. Teacher in-services were held on how to use technology as means of idea sharing through real time collaboration. A Wikipedia roadmap of shared ideas to systematic change became the foundation of that process.

**PPE #4** **Social networking through the use of our school wiki became the mechanism in which we defined instruction, team consistency, and our professional learning communities.**

The second incremental step was to establish student exposure by *investing time in digital tools and workspaces*. This step included the redefining of workspaces by selecting and using appropriate learning applications by having students construct and post digital content. To ensure that all students were exposed to the digital learning tools and spaces we decided to create two required elective classes. The elective classes would be project based and would transition students into common core skill sets of problem solving and creative writing. Every student in our school is also enrolled in a full year technology lab for three consecutive years. To enhance student use of social networking we implemented Google apps into the learning environment.

**PPE #5** **Through these viable digital tools students are beginning to learn how to participate in a user-driven social media culture for collaboration and co-creation.**

The third incremental step was to address the ideas of *student centered learning*. Student centered thinking became the foundations of our action plan that would enable us to instinctively develop the essential drivers to systematic change. In other words, we knew that the traditional frontal delivery of content would not work in a digital learning environment. We identified four foundational characteristics that place the student at the center of knowledge obtainment.

**PPE #6** **These four characteristics to student centered learning include:**

- *Student Centered Learning Accountability*

- *Instructional methods to activate student learning*
- *The development of a universal set of literacy skills*
- *Designing student learning into authentic task and assessment*

To address these four characteristics we have to first shift the responsibility for learning from the instructor to the students. Secondly we will have to change our instructional methods from givers of information to the facilitators of learning. We also have to focus on literacy skills; the literacy skills that are deeply embedded in the new standards and in all subjects. These are the literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking, reasoning and the use of technology. The last characteristic is for each teacher to become a designer of learning. Within the next two years we hope to be able to design authentic tasks that are assessment based using the rigor and relevance model. These will be the instructional strategies that include being able to activate the learning process without influencing student choices. Students will also need to be taught the value of setting up their own personal learning environments which includes the student's ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments.

## 8. Closing

- *The “Silver Bullet” (Sarah)*

### #21 PPE: Silver Bullet

**PPE #1** Everyone is always looking for that silver bullet, **PPE #2** that one thing that will make a difference, that will change the climate or the culture or the leadership of a school.

**PPE #3** But if we are honest with ourselves, **PPE #4** we realize there is no silver bullet.

**PPE #5** We asked a number of our staff if they could identify something, some one thing that has changed our school. Here is what they said.

### #22 UTUBE: Silver Bullet

### #23 UTUBE: DCMS Cheerleaders

### #24 UTUBE: “We Are the Champions!”