

# Planning for Quality Performance Assessment

## Slide One Title Slide

The essential question behind today's presentation is how principals prepare teachers for the start of a new school year especially when initiating multiple levels of change **"Planning for Quality Performance Assessment within a 1:1 Mobile Learning Environment."**

We can equate the importance to planning, direction, leadership, and communications with the following statement from Lewis Carroll.

## Slide Two

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" asked Alice

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where-" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

Lewis Carroll's statement of "Which way I ought to go from here is a conclusive reason on why it is important to set goals. That is why our building administrative team starts the school year by viewing data from the previous year's successes which also emphasizes the continuation of school goals.

## Slide Three

Much can be said about why learning goals are important as they are useful as a prism through which we can view the totality of school improvement. This means that goals need to be rightly understood as they are urged to unify the most essential elements of our school success. Goals at Dodge City Middle School have been very powerful as they have helped us clarify and redefine our relationship between our work effort and accomplishments. These goals are not just school goals they are community, teacher and student goals as well.

Over the last two years our school has been gearing up for the new challenges of Common Core implementation, preparing for next the generation of assessments, and focusing on improved

instruction by defining improved expectations in teacher evaluation, as we prepare our students to be Career and College ready. These new challenges coupled with digital learning assets have brought to the forefront a concerted effort by our school to embrace change through the development of a new set of building level SMART Goals. Like most schools we are designing ways to meet the challenges of defining Career and College readiness from various points of view when preparing students for the workforce of the future. In other words we are at the tipping point of change and we need a well defined accountability plan to measure student growth as it equates to accountability.

When you have multiple layers of new initiatives, such as the ones we are currently experiencing, the building administrative team must be able to communicate desired expectations for the future while allowing teachers to define the process, pace, level of acceptance and alignment to these tipping points of change. To communicate effectively what is expected at every level can only be accomplished through a well designed building plan that is clearly defined by all stakeholders and consistently followed. That is why this year we decided to revise our planning model to match future accountability standards outlined from what we already know.

#### **Slide Four**

Our building improvement plan is somewhat unique as our smart goals are universally connected to the five R's of (Relationships, Relevance, Rigor, Results and Response to Culture) The five R's provide the foundations for consistency in standards as they are established as indicators of success. In other words, we are fostering consistency throughout the building and have worked to define this consistency through collaboration, consensus and team work.

At the end of the year we initiate conversations about goal accomplishments with talking points. The talking points are based on data from various assessments, including perception surveys, academic achievement and whether or not we could reach specific goals. Talking points are elements within the building plan that are obtainable but need revisiting for clarity and consensus. The talking points provide our building leadership team and professional learning communities an opportunity to prioritize progress statements. These talking points give us a reference to setting our yearly goals as these goals are formulated from benchmark assessments, and perception surveys. We also know as a school and district we could not reach

many of our goals unless we built into the plan additional time for professional learning and collaboration.

### **Slide Five**

To provide the needed time for teachers to work together as professional learning communities, we have constructed a master schedule that allows subject level teams a common time to discuss curriculum, instruction, and student achievement results. Every week on Wednesdays our subject level teachers meet to review academic performance from our data warehouse that helps our teachers design instruction to meet individual student needs through interventions. We have also established this year thirteen days within the school year as late start days for students. A late start is a one and a half hour time period where teachers have an opportunity to work together to improve instructional practices, define common core units of study while reviewing data on student performance and instructional walkthroughs.

### **Slide Six**

At Dodge City Middle School we have established three key areas that drive our professional learning communities. These three key areas are specified by purpose and include: the Building Literacy Team, the 21st Century Learning team, and the Student Advocacy team. Two days prior to school starting we have build in time where the building administrative team meets with PLC leaders to review elements of the building plan, analyze data from the previous year, and confirm academic benchmarks goals. Academic benchmarks are based on our end of unit subject level assessments that are calculated using an Academic Performance Index. The building leadership team also establishes walkthrough instructional benchmarks that have been re-written to support improved instruction with an emphasis on personalized learning. I have included a portion of our building plan as a handout.

### **Slide Seven**

During this meeting the PLC team leaders develop the first literacy skill that will be focused on

by every member of our faculty. Our literacy topics for this year's purposeful learning " learning how to learn" includes;

1. To look at a question, be able to read it independently & formulate an answer independently (active reading strategies)
2. To generate a response to what one has read, viewed or heard
3. To explain one's thinking in complete sentences
4. To take Cornell notes & use them to write an open response
5. To describe an experience & report one's conclusions
6. To compare & contrast
7. To argue an idea and support one's thinking

This year our 21st Century PLC will be constructing mobile learning consistency practices. The reason we define consistency is because we are a Middle Schools and middle level students thrive on consistency. In other words we do not change the rules from class to class. Think of it this way, in the work environment we do not change our office routines and expectations seven to eight times a day, nor do we ask our workers to experience 20 to 30 applications to create a work flow. We also do not warehouse our content in 10 to twenty different locations especially when creating a individualized learning portfolios. These common threads of expectations apply to both using, sharing and storing digital resources. As a school we hopefully find consensus on a common set of digital tools and practices that is applicable for our learning teams. These definitions of digital practices include;

- App selection that can be progressive by grades while integrating Google docs as the primary application. "A common place to store content that is accessible for all teams and students that is under a protective domain."
- A common set of expectations for student usage that all teachers on a team can agree on.
- I have included a hand out of our primary talking points for building consensus in 21st century classrooms.

Our primary focus will be helping students to generate digital content as it becomes displayed as a part of their digital portfolio. This is the personalized learning that we will focus on as we move students from grade level to grade level over the next few years. These portfolios will

become a part of a student led conference held three times per year.

To ensure that we reach higher levels of digital fluency we are in the process of establishing a digital portfolio content creation course in iTunes U. The plans for the digital fluency course will cover all three levels of digital learning from accessing information, use of digital media, and creating a warehouse of shared digital compilations.