

Final Report

Project Goals:

Of the three goals identified in the PDIG application, two were achieved and one was adapted. A developmental continuum of essential oral production tasks, by grade, was established. The continuum outlined expected tasks, tactics, strategies, and collaborative practices organized by grade level. The second goal was to establish clear criteria and rubrics for assessing and evaluating spoken production and the conventions of spoken language in order to establish greater consistency when providing a mark for spoken production. This goal was partially realized as the team felt that first there was a need to select and/or create tools to collect evidence of oral production. Agreement was reached; however, on marks that would be accorded when adaptations are in place. Additional time to meet is required to pursue the development of the criteria and rubrics to assess/ evaluate talk to learn. The development of a resource document that will be shared with present, new, and replacement ELA teachers, Goal 3, in order to assure consistency in the evaluation process was started. The documents will be shared and discussed during departmental meetings and feedback will be requested in order to modify the resources as needed.

Project Outcomes

The team appreciated the time to work and collaborate together with respect to the teaching and evaluation of the Talk Competency. One of the critical gains of the PDIG was the focus on establishing consistent practices regarding collecting and evaluating data relative to the Talk Competency. Teachers had identified the need to have greater consistency across the grade levels with regard to scaffolding, evaluating, and grading oral communication in the classroom. By sharing tools, tactics, strategies, collaborative practices, and marking systems, as organized by the PDIG Team, with the ELA Department, ELA teachers will have an opportunity to try out the resources, provide feedback to the team, and have opportunities to participate in professional dialogue as a department. Not only will the work of the PDIG team be shared with teachers presently on staff; but also, will provide direction for new and replacement teachers.

Reinvestment

The participants strongly believed that there was a need to look closely at not only the evaluation of; but also, at the instructional practices that support oral communication in the classroom. After reviewing the expectations identified in the Progression of Learning for talk in the classroom, the participants identified resources, tactics, strategies, collaborative techniques and evaluation practices that form a strong instructional repertoire to scaffold the development and grading of the talk competency. The learning achieved by the team will be shared and promoted with their colleagues through professional discussions and dialogue during department meetings, in partner discussions, and through modeling. The team also expressed their strong belief that they need to have dedicated time to meet and further pursue effective instructional and evaluation practices related to the Talk to Learn Competency.

Other school teams would benefit from carrying out a similar project. The participants indicated that the uninterrupted and dedicated time to meet was instrumental in helping them accomplish their goals. Additional time, in excess of the three days allotted to this project, would be required. Teachers need to apply the resources in the classroom, review the feedback, and make necessary adjustments to the various tools and suggestions. In order to effectively continue this work, the teachers would need to assume the work of a lead team; increase the number of days to meet within the school year; and extend the work over a minimum period of two years.

