

September Communique from the Common Core Steering Committee

The CC Steering Committee met Monday, September 14, to get updates on summer progress, address concerns early this fall, and make plans for the year.

The group of TVEA-approved teachers and district administrators meets monthly to work towards a positive implementation of Common Core standards across the district, with a focus of being solution-minded and results-oriented.

- Members discussed the current avenues for communication in place for questions, input on refinements, and feedback on resources and assessments, and agreed that staff need to be refreshed on where to take different concerns related to Common Core implementation. Principals will be communicating this information to teaching staff, and you can view the electronic copy of the flyer that addresses, "Avenues for Feedback and Input?" here: <http://www.tveducators.org/images/docs/whocanhelp.pdf>

- Andree Grey and Joe Balleweg are working with a programmer to help customize and make adjustments that address teachers' needs within the grade book function of Infinite Campus.

- Anchor papers and specific rubrics are being collected for teachers to use as an aid in scoring assessments at the secondary level in ELA. If the process goes well and produces solid results, there are plans to replicate it at the elementary level in ELA. Secondary PLC trainings are being "beefed up" to address rubrics and grading.

- Feedback from elementary teachers shaped the drafts of report cards now available on the Infinite Campus website. Revised weights within each category resulted from the same discussions.

- Changes to Common Core assessments from last year occurred because of feedback from PLC teams. PLC teams need to continue to use the google drive to give feedback to the refinement teams who make revisions.

- Continuing professional development on using SmartBoards are coming up—one is Friday, Sept 19. Teachers will also have the opportunity to meet after school on several dates to share resources and ideas on using SmartBoards in the classroom. There is a schedule of Smart Board training dates on the district web site under the staff tab.

- Teachers having tech problems with SmartBoards need to alert the appropriate technicians to get them solved immediately. Go Math technicians can help with any technology challenges, too.

- There was considerable progress this summer on Middle School Math curriculum. PLC teams of language arts and math teachers should continue to share valuable resources and suggestions for consideration for the google drive. There is a strong effort to be selective and “curate” the resources put on the drive for sharing.
- 3 full days or 6 half days are set up for secondary teachers this year to work on Common Core work. 3 half days will be used for elementary teachers, in addition to the time afforded by VAPA.
- A new math data base will be introduced for all levels. PLC leaders are receiving training on databases such as the Inspect test item bank and The Digital Library from Smarter Balanced. These resources will provide grade level and content teams with abundant resources aligned to CCSS test items and standards from which to build in unit lessons and formative assessments.

Future meeting dates are scheduled for Oct. 20, Nov. 17, and Jan. 26. Meetings will focus on a report from a teacher who attended the CTA Summer Institute Common Core course, a discussion of the roll-out of Science Standards, report cards as they relate to Common Core Standards, and funding at the mid-year point, along with topics that teachers and administrators indicate a need to address.

The Common Core Steering Committee consists of these members:

Sina Albertoni (2nd grade teacher at TLES), Jenniffer Aynesworth (principal at VHES), Joe Balleweg (ESS), Carleen Cook (5th grade teacher at PVES), Andree Grey (ESS), Karen Hogan (Special Ed TOSA), Marc Horton (principal at GOHS), Karen Hoskins (math teacher at BVMS), Jeff Kingsberg (TVEA President), Chris Lindberg (4th grade teacher at FVES), Jodi McClay (ESS), Tina Miller (principal at DMS), Kristan Morales (math teacher at CHS), Aimee Ricken (English teacher at GOHS), Breck Smith (Special Ed Assistant Director), Anna Tapley (principal at FVES), and Katie Vanderhorst (English teacher at DMS).

You may contact any member of the committee to suggest discussion at meetings. (The link to “Avenues for Feedback and Input” will clarify where to take questions, concerns, positive feedback, and concerns.)