

Monday Message

March 17, 2014 Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Spring Observations...

Please review the attachments for additional details.

Non-Probationary Teachers:

Complete Self –Assessment: Spring

Complete Goal Reflection: Spring

Second Informal Observation (20-30 minutes):

Spring

Lesson plan

Optional

You might consider providing me with your lesson plans the day after your informal observation, this will assist me in evaluating Domain 1

Post-Observation meeting Required

You might want to consider reviewing the post observation form in order to collect your thoughts for our post observation meeting.

Probationary Teachers:

Complete Goal Reflection: Spring

Third Formal Observation: (30-45 mins.)

Spring

Pre –observation form Optional

Pre-observation meeting Required

Lesson plan Required

You might consider providing me with your lesson plans the day before the pre-observation meeting, as this will assist me in evaluating Domain 1

Post Observation meeting Required

You might want to consider reviewing the post observation form in order to collect your thoughts for our post observation meeting.

Non-Probationary Teachers...

I will complete informal observations during readers' workshop. Please submit a copy of your most current schedule that reflects your readers' workshop times. After the observation, please set up the required post-observation meeting with Jenny.

Probationary Teachers...

I will complete your third formal observation during readers' workshop. Please schedule a pre-observation meeting, a lesson time, and a post observation meeting with Jenny.

I would like to get a head start on the observations rather than waiting until April to complete all observations. But please; let me know if you prefer to wait until April.



May your blessings
outnumber
The shamrocks that
grow,
And may trouble avoid
you
Wherever you go.

Irish Blessing

Costello Fair...

Thank you to all who have signed up to help at the Costello Fair this Saturday, March 22. What a fun time to connect with students and parents. I know the PTO appreciates your support.

Grade Level Meetings...

Grades 2-5...If you have not signed up with your team for grade level meetings, to review MEAP data, **please schedule these this week**. Thank you. I realize that it may not always work for teams to meet together, if it is easier for you to meet individually that can work too.

Bemis Cultures of Thinking Visit...

Last week Lindsey, Julie D. and I got to participate in a valuable professional development opportunity. Bemis staff shared their journey through CoT. They were where we are today, about four years ago. I encourage you to talk to Lindsey and Julie about their thoughts.

Two of the fifth grade students shared testimonials of the changes in their learning and how they saw their teachers evolve through CoT. Equally powerful was that the entire building was open to visitors. Nobody was left out of this event. Each classroom, even those with long term substitutes, modeled lessons, and displayed work that was more about the process than the product. Discussions were about extending thinking, not just getting to the "right" answer. Students were engaged and interactions showed evidence of well-practiced routines.

One teacher shared her story of initial frustrations and skepticism of CoT. Through close collaboration with grade level and vertical teams, modeling and practicing the routines over and over, and looking at student work as a building, she saw the growth that her students made. She said it refreshed her as a teacher and totally changed the way she delivered instruction and managed her classroom.

What struck me in this visit were the parallels that I see at Costello. Have you seen the work in our hallways? Have you ventured into another grade level to see the "MR. POLITE" CoT in action? There is so much to see and learn just from walking through our building. I love the way the Costello staff embraces challenges as a team.

The conversations that you are having are not always about what is going right in relation to CoT, but they are about the struggles, frustrations, and questions you are facing after trying something out that didn't go as planned. One of the Bemis teachers remembered being in precisely the same spot his first year of implementation. After talking with one another, trying a new approach, etc. more often than not your reflections highlight the results and growth. This reflective practice lines up with the CoT goals that we established at the beginning of the year.

I applaud each of you for the energy and excitement you bring to our monthly meetings with Ellen and the optional "coffee talks." I also know that there is far more conversation going on beyond these meetings. I want to thank each of you for your commitment to developing your classroom into a Culture of Thinking classroom. The momentum that you carry through your enthusiasm makes an impact on both your students and your colleagues. THANK YOU for all that you do! This IS the right work and I have no doubt that the visitors who come to Costello will walk away WOWed!

May the luck of the Irish be with you today!

Tammy