

# Friday Focus

**November 2, 2012**

Costello staff you are absolutely the best! Thank you so much for making this a terrific first quarter. You supported me over and over answering my numerous questions. Everyone is extremely flexible and understanding. You have been patient in letting me get back to you on answers that might have otherwise been a quick response. You have shown me that you are here to do what is best for kids. You “read” your kids needs and develop a plan to help them. You reach out to others to get support...this is so very important. We can't do this hard work independently! Through optional PD and constant professional collaboration you have shown that you are all willing learner. You have extended your hours to take care of kids. The list could go on and on. In November we reflect on what we are thankful for...I am so very thankful for each of you.

## **Professional Development...**

Thank you for setting up and facilitating the discussion on Visible Thinking Lisa & Joe. It is so nice to be able to hear everyone's ideas and ways to incorporate these strategies in our school. For those of you who attended, thank you for taking the extra time to participate.

## **Small Group Talk...**

Thank you so much for sharing your ideas and giving up a chunk of your time to visit about this important topic. I will share handouts with you, doing a little tweaking first!

“Open Door” classroom concept...that is brilliant, thank you Cathy and Karen.

## **Grade Card Comments...**

I would like to start reading report cards on Thursday evening, November 8<sup>th</sup> of next week. If you finish before then, please let me know so I can start on your cards.

I am sure that you already do this, but just a few reminders on the narrative comments and some wording that might be helpful.

- Specific feedback is more meaningful than general statements.
- Balance positive feedback with areas to improve.
- Appreciation of working together as a team to support your child.
- Use spell check ☺
- Please let me know, or consult a colleague, if you have a tricky message to deliver and you want to discuss the wording. I know anyone would be willing to help.

## Self-Evaluation & Goal Setting...

I am sharing some reflections that Jan Keeling passed on from the TEAM committee.

Teachers are allowed to choose/propose goals from any of the four domains (excluding the required domain 5 growth goal)

When filling out the Self-Evaluation it is not required, but it may be helpful for teachers to provide additional narrative information/rationale which may be referred back to when the reflection on the self-directed teacher enhancement plan is completed. Again, this is not required.

Will the self-evaluation be used against teachers if they score themselves less than effective under certain elements? **Absolutely not, this document is a self-reflection for the purpose of determining possible areas for growth development (goals).**

If you have special education students who are out of your room during math and your student growth goal is about math, are those students assigned to you or the special education teacher?

For example, one teacher has the goal "All students will show growth in the ability to solve multiplication facts. By the end of the year 90% of my student will pass their multiplication fact tests." Yet she has three students who receive math instruction from the special education teacher. She is wondering if she is still responsible for those children learning and passing their multiplication facts. **This is a great question and one that would have been a perfect example as we discussed the need for flexibility in the mid-year and end**

**of the year goals meetings. "All students" refers to our belief that "all students" includes the three special education students referenced in the question above. It is our expectation that these students, along with the general education students, will show some growth. When it comes to the multiplication fact test it would be appropriate to focus the percent range on the general education students that were included in the normal classroom instruction. We would suggest this teacher identify a growth percentage range (e.g. 80-90%). These examples are often subject specific and will always require the need to have dialogue around the unique opportunities each student brings to classroom instruction.**

## Conference Schedule...

### Wednesday, November 14

1:30 – 4:00

5:30-8:30

### Thursday, November 15 – Students in AM

4:30-7:30

\*Please note that conferences are 15 minutes, there are 31 slots. The online sign up reflect 5 minutes between conferences on Thursday, but not on Wednesday. You might consider setting a timer to keep the conferences on schedule.

**Please e-mail me if you have students not signed up for the conferences so that we can send something out from the office.**

## Informal Evaluations...

I am in the process of doing these now. I will have these completed by December 1. You may sign up for the formal evaluation starting December 1 through January 30.

Goal setting meetings...you can sign up for these anytime that works for you. I am going to get a half day sub on Friday, November 9 to help speed up this process. You can sign up on the bulletin board in the office.

### **Energy Assemblies...**

I wish I had more details on the Energy Assemblies...I am still trying.

2:00-2:45 Grades 3,4,5

3:00-3:45 Grade K,1,2 Building Blocks

Orchestra will need to utilize an alternate location. I will let you know where this will be on Monday.

### **Surveys...**

**Please read attachment on surveys for Advanced Ed. You will be receiving a packet with surveys soon.**

### **Red Ribbon Week is November 5-9...**

Please be sure to utilize some of the many resources to promote Red Ribbon Week in your classroom. Resources are in the shared folder labeled Red Ribbon Week. On Monday all students should sign the "Lead a Healthy – Drug Free Life" pledge sheet, these were in your boxes last week along with the ribbons. I am also making one copy of the MY HERO writing prompt, please have your students write to this prompt through a class shared writing, independent writing, etc. I am happy to use my copy number to make copies, just let me know...I know some grades may want to add lines. I would love to visit your rooms at the end of the week and have the students show me what they did as a class or individually. Your words make such an impression...thanks for promoting the importance of being drug free.

### **Student Teachers...**

Grades 1-5, if you are interested in having a student teacher please let me know.

### **Science Kits...**

Please, please, please be sure that ALL of the science kit materials are inventoried and ready for on time pick-up. Kits should be in front hall by the end of the day on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. Instead of NCLB...we need to ensure NKLB (No Kit Left Behind). Thank you!

### **ELA Folders...**

If any of you are in need of ELA folders, please email me with the number that you need. The new printing is a little different than the previously printed version. The folders are white with blue printing. The District ELA chairs discussed the writing assessment portion of the folder. The recording of the year, grade, teacher and Fall/ Spring date has been deleted from the folder. The rationale for this is: Teachers are required to attach the student's sample to the rubric and place it in the ELA folder. Thus, the needed information regarding the student should be on the sample/rubric. The ELA team is trying to decrease the number of times teachers need to fill in duplicate information.

I do hope you get to relax this weekend. I know how much work this time of the year is.

Tammy