

Transforming Education in Rhode Island



The Race to the Top Opportunity

Professional Learning Communities

Mini-Grant Opportunity

2012-2014

What are the Professional Learning Community (PLC) Mini-Grants?

Race to the Top funding was used to support Rhode Island educators to work collaboratively in PLCs. Educators applied for mini-grants to support their work in one of three areas that support student achievement. This report is summary of their work and accomplishments.

#1

- *Using the Common Core State Standards*

#2

- *Closing Achievement Gaps*

#3

- *Creating Innovative Approaches to Building Effective Parent-Teacher Partnerships*

Who received the PLC Mini-Grants?

PLC	Focus Area	Contact
Warwick Veterans Memorial High School <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Building Parent-Teacher Partnerships	Sean McNamara
Metcalf Elementary School (Exeter-West Greenwich) <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Closing Achievement Gaps	Michaelene Bouchard
Highlander Charter School <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Closing Achievmenet Gaps	Shawn Rubin
Chariho <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Nancy Pirnie
Feinstein Middle School (Coventry) <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Mary-Lou Bettez
Glocester Elementary Schools <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Patricia Dubois
The Greene School <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Deanna Duncan
International Charter School <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2013)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Julie Nora
Narragansett Elementary School <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2013)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Gail Dandurand
North Kingstown Elementary Schools <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Chris Keefe
Samuel Slater Middle School (Pawtucket) <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Jacqueline Ash
Tiverton, Bristol Warren, and Portsmouth <i>(Funding Period: July 2012 – June 2014)</i>	Using the Common Core State Standards	Diane Sanna

Warwick Veterans Memorial High School

The goal of this PLC was to create a shared responsibility between parents and teachers in order to improve student achievement.



Two digital monitors were installed; they display important information, daily announcements, and a calendar of school events. They are located in the main office and outside the gymnasium.

- ❑ “Student of the Quarter” ceremonies recognize students’ individual classroom successes. These are well attended by parents and guardians, and will continue to be part of the school culture.
- ❑ Magnets with school contacts were distributed with student schedules.
- ❑ A “Welcome to Vets” video was created and will be shown at freshman orientation, and posted on the school website.

Signs were installed to help parents and visitors locate parking, offices, and other areas around the school.



Warwick Veterans Memorial High School

**2401 West Shore Road
Warwick, Rhode Island 02889**

**401.734.3200
www.warwickschools.org**

Metcalfe Elementary School (Exeter-West Greenwich)

The goal of this PLC was to close the reading achievement gap by using a modified lesson study process to develop smaller group reading lessons, while utilizing Response to Intervention data.

Teachers used the Common Core State Standards as a lens to choose, plan, and analyze lessons. They anticipated what progress towards a standard might look like, and were able to deliberately plan instruction to elicit thinking and action.

"I've learned to ask more probing questions, to engage students, and improve their critical thinking skills."

-Laurie, Grade 3 Teacher

"I've learned to anticipate student difficulties, allowing for better lesson planning and preparation."

-Cheryl, Grade 4 Teacher

"I learned to use data to analyze each student's needs to better prepare my lessons and reach student goals."

-Mimi, Title I Reading Specialist



Metcalfe Elementary School

At Metcalfe School, we believe all students can achieve academic excellence

and become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Highlander Charter School

The focus of this PLC was to bring together education technology pioneers and adopters from various districts across RI, in partnership with the Business Innovation Factory, to explore technology models, approaches, and solutions to enhance student achievement.

The PLC launched *EdUnderground*, a hands-on laboratory where teachers can discover, explore, create and experiment with technology integration strategies, blended learning models, and other innovative tactics to support the diverse needs of students.

Focused on 21st Century skills and learning standards, including the *Hour of Code*

“Lack of technology understanding and know-how has created a gap among teachers, and has potential to widen the student achievement gap.”
– PLC member

Explored “EdTech hardware” and learned to use smart boards, digital microscopes, clickers, etc.



HIGHLANDER
CHARTER SCHOOL
Learning as diverse as our students



BUSINESS
INNOVATION
FACTORY



HIGHLANDER
INSTITUTE
Leveling the Field for All Learners

Chariho Regional School District

The purpose of this PLC was to support the district's transition to the Common Core State Standards in mathematics.

The 14 members of the PLC worked to ensure district-wide knowledge and expertise in the curriculum.

Hosted model classroom lessons in order to increase district capacity.

Particular focus on constructing viable arguments and critiquing reasoning of others, modeling with mathematics, and attending to precision.



Chariho Regional School District

Serving the Communities of Charlestown, Richmond, and Hopkinton in Southern Rhode Island

[District Information](#) [PowerSchool](#) [Quick Links](#) [Teaching & Learning](#)

Feinstein Middle School (Coventry)

The focus of this PLC was to articulate curriculum, identify resources, share instructional strategies and lessons, and calibrate student work in order to refine curriculum components based on student need.

OUTCOMES

1

- Curriculum materials developed for each unit of study

2

- Student work exemplars

3

- Revision of school-wide rubrics

The following observations were made:

- ❖ PLCs have a direct impact on teaching and learning
- ❖ PLCs build capacity
- ❖ PLCs are essential to shift the instructional paradigm

The PLC presented at the
Educators in Action

CUT TO THE CORE
Common Core
Networking Conference



October 26, 2013

where educators learned
about the CCSS in an
interactive and
collaborative environment.



Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School *of Coventry*

Glocester Elementary Schools

The focus of this PLC was to develop CCSS experts - teacher liaisons between the district and its teachers for alignment of instruction to the Common Core State Standards - in addition to providing instructional strategies and integrating technology into daily instruction.

Examined all literature and considered text complexity to determine appropriate libraries.

Researched and provided instructional strategies to support increased emphasis on numeracy in K-5.

Created K-5 evidence-based selected response questions for informational and narrative texts.

Provided additional support to teachers to continue integrating technology into daily instruction.

Fogarty Memorial School

West Glocester Elementary School

The Greene School

This PLC worked to align the mathematics curriculum to the Common Core State Standards. Educators at The Green School developed a curriculum for blended learning, including logistics, schedule, and appropriate training needed to facilitate a blended learning classroom.

Worked with mathematics teachers and school designers to add software in all math classrooms.

Facilitated the process of aligning math learning targets with the CCSS. A math scope and sequence document was generated for all math programs.

Developed benchmark assessments aligned to the CCSS for all mathematics programs.



International Charter School

The goal of this PLC was to better align literacy framework with the Common Core State Standards, including developing curriculum in three languages for all classrooms, in addition to learning how to better meet the needs of second-language learners.

DEVELOPED:

Map of intensive study of comprehension strategies

Crosswalk of CCSS and the Literacy Studio strategies

Unit design for launching Literacy Studio in grades K-5

First intensive study unit for each grade, with differentiation plans

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Teaching in the languages of our community: English, español, Português

Narragansett Elementary School

The focus of this PLC was to ensure teachers have the knowledge and tools they need for effective instruction aligned with the Common Core State Standards.



- Created aligned systems of instruction, resources, and assessments

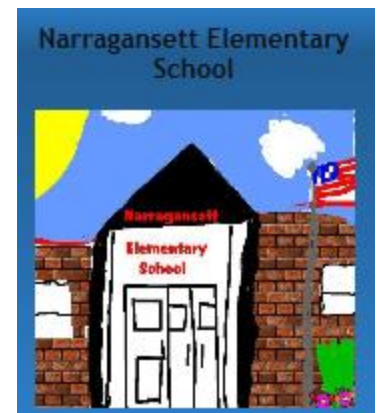
- Book discussion groups conducted summary presentations at faculty meetings

- Teachers had a deeper understanding of the CCSS and the impact on instruction

“We wanted to ensure that teachers had the knowledge and tools needed to effectively instruct students with the new Common Core State Standards.”

-Gail Dandurand, Principal

PLC members created CCSS mathematics resource binders (including the standards, scope and sequence, district resources, and pacing guides), for distribution to each grade level teacher.



North Kingstown Elementary Schools

The focus of this PLC was to support 5th grade teachers' implementation of the math Common Core State Standards by providing professional development opportunities on the new standards.

Accomplishments:

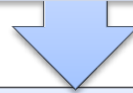
- ✓ Evaluation of texts
- ✓ Scope & Sequence

Lessons Learned:

- ✓ Transition depends on cross-grade communication
- ✓ A little technology goes a long way

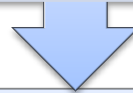
POSSESSING THE STANDARDS

VS



UNDERSTANDING THE STANDARDS

VS



Being able to teach them!

"To understand CCSS, teachers need time to debrief & reflect on new concepts and practices."

– Chris Keefe and Steven Skaggs,
Stony Lane Elementary School

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North Kingstown School Department
Educate, Inspire, Challenge

Samuel Slater Junior High (Pawtucket)

The goals of this PLC were to address the problem that only 51% of their students are proficient writers and that the quality of writing deemed proficient varied from teacher to teacher. Educators at Slater JHS worked to increase knowledge and skills in writing instruction, and they will encourage teachers to hold students accountable for proper English grammar and usage.

Developed and facilitated professional development sessions with help from district Literacy Coach

- Held with cross-curricular teams during Common Planning Time. PLC members modeled teaching students various aspects of the writing process, demonstrating the gradual release of the responsibility model.

Developed list of non-negotiable C.U.P.S (capitalization, usage, punctuation, spelling) to be used school-wide

- Built the skills and confidence level of all teachers to hold students accountable for standard English grammar.

Developed school-wide common writing prompts

- Included both writing to inform and to persuade. Established school-wide common expectations through calibration activities and scoring student work collaboratively.

Samuel Slater
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Bristol Warren/Portsmouth/Tiverton

This PLC saw a need for instruction that provides meaningful opportunities for students to read, write, and talk about science. Teachers researched literacy strategies to support science learning, and developed lessons that integrate with the Common Core State Standards.

The PLC for scientific literacy offered teachers the opportunity to experiment with new ideas in a supportive environment. Working with consultants from the East Bay Collaborative to accomplish the following:

"It is extremely helpful to hear what is going on in other districts. Sharing ideas and resources is a great way to improve instruction." -Delores, Tiverton Middle School

"The PLC puts a shared collaboration of best practice into action by incorporating what we learn in our classrooms." -Erin, Portsmouth Middle School

"Being able to share lessons with like-minded people and take things right back to the classroom has been helpful." -Teacher, Bristol-Warren

- Engaged in study of the CCSS for ELA in science, NGSS practices and research on effective practices for scientific literacy
- Developed lessons to support learning in upcoming units
- Analyze samples of student work from across districts and make lesson adjustments if needed.

TIVERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT



BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Charting a Course for Excellence