



Central New York Data Analysis Community (CNYDAC)

Minutes from the February 12, 2009 Meeting
Distance Learning Center - OCM BOCES
Thompson Road Campus

- Agenda Overview:** Hour 1 – Review of Survey Data
Mission and Functions Clarification
- Hour 2 – Chris Byrne, Phoenix common formative assessments
Member shares re: Formative Assessments

1. Introductions:

In attendance: Shelley Blodgett (Sandy Creek), Annette Borelli (Jordan Elbridge), Brent Bowden (Central Square), Chris Byrne (Phoenix), Neal Capone (CNYRIC), Jeff Craig (OCM BOCES), RJ DeLisle (Baldwinsville), Don DeJohn (CNYRIC), Jessica Docteur (Marcellus), Pam Dowse (Fulton), Andy Eldridge (Union Springs), Lauren Faessler (CNYRIC), Jenni Fanelli (OCM BOCES), Jaclyn Gangloff (Fayetteville-Manlius), Leela George (Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES), Amy Howard-McCormack (Sandy Creek), Greg Kelahan (Cazenovia), Peter McCarthy (Solvay), Tim Moon (Oswego), Donna Marie Norton (North Syracuse), Mary Ann Preston (Oswego BOCES), Ellen Tapley (Fayetteville-Manlius), Carri Waloven (Hannibal), Terry Ward (CNYRIC)

2. Review of Member Survey Data

- Want to learn collaboratively
- Want to meet 4 times a year on Wednesday/Thursday Afternoon
- Share experiences
- Surprised that the growth model was a main point of interest
- Formative Assessment was rated highest in the topic category

3. Review of Mission and Functions:

- Mission and Vision were handed out and reviewed

4. Formative Assessments:

- Used Visual Synectics picture of 2 people rafting to activate thoughts about formative assessments
- Most spoke about journey, steering, path, roadblocks and barriers
- Shared experiences from districts

5. Member Sharing

- Chris Byrne: Chris shared a Common Formative Assessment Questionnaire developed for Phoenix Central Schools. Grade level and departments were asked on a Staff Development Day to complete the questionnaire. Based upon feedback an Assessment Chart for each grade level had been developed to articulate current common assessments. Other highlights and dialogue during question and answer period included: Working on consistency in the district, Formative Assessments tied to curriculum maps, Directive from the BOE, Professional Development Committee is involved, Getting past resistance in HS, Turned into a grass roots initiative in Baldwinsville starting with a mid-term...
- Processed article: "Taking Formative Assessments School Wide" in a Jigsaw fashion. Group article discussions included: We are surprised we are not far behind other districts, How to accomplish using formative assessments in districts, etc.
- Questions to consider: Where is the data housed, How is the information disseminated? Time for collaboration between teachers? How are teachers using the information? Deprivatizing practice?

5. Reflection: Three-Minute Manuscript

What I've learned today:

- We are in good company when it comes to feeling our way through the formative assessment process.
- I've learned that common assessment is not always formative! However, there is value in having teachers collaborate around assessments. These conversations should help clarify instructional purpose!
- I heard a variety of perspectives on how to implement formative assessments.
- Awareness of the process – What areas other districts are struggling with and where they are in the true scope of using formative assessment to drive instruction.
- Wonderful discussions on formative assessment from around the region.
- Learned a great deal from other colleagues about formative assessments.
- To remember to focus on the conversations more than the numbers when talking with teachers about data . . . especially with regards to item analysis.
- Districts across the region are experiencing similar transitions in regards to data and are also at the point of looking at the instructional implications.

- Great discussions on formative assessments.
- Good sharing of ideas and concerns with formative assessments.
- Ways various districts are implementing common formative assessment practices.
- “We’re not alone.”
- I learned that many data/instructional professionals have the same needs that I have in that they want to know more about the topics on the survey. I also learned more about formative assessments.
- Common understanding of formative assessment remains somewhat elusive.
- The importance of clear language and a common understanding of this language. While we don’t want to get caught up in semantics, it is important that we all mean the same thing when we say the same thing.
- Always ask kids if you are making decisions about their learning!!
- That using formative assessments needs to be a well-planned, organized, thoughtful exercise and it usually isn’t!
- That schools are in all different places when it comes to formative assessment – shared understanding does not exist.
- Many of us share the same obstacles and frustrations, but a few leaders have some wonderful ideas/suggestions that we can learn from.
- Vocabulary! The type of assessment is dependent on how the results are used.

One way: that I will apply this concept of collaborative formative assessment in my work with others is:

- I’m thinking about professional development in use of short-term (immediate feedback) formative assessments.
- Develop constructive data dialogue with teachers about their common assessments. What the item analysis is and what it is not.
- During data collaboration, I’ll be sure to point out common assessment is not always formative and that data conversations should help clarify instructional purpose.
- This will help in conversations with districts interested in exploring formative assessments or that want to learn more about formative assessments.
- Slowly and on a small scale, I will continue to encourage teachers to recognize the things they already do that are “formative” and will push them to think about the “now what” part.
- Helping people understand the difference between common assessments, formative assessments, and benchmark assessments.
- Define various types of assessments for teachers to help them understand the difference between formative, summative, and others (diagnostic, screening, etc. . .).
- Continue conversations with administrators in districts.
- Know where to look for a school that is “leading the way.”

- To share the article with some of my colleagues and to question what is happening in my district.
- How to convey the need for formative assessments and how use of this data can make for more successful classrooms.
- Bring thoughts from today to regional formative assessment discussions.
- Thinking about data meetings – have people go back to protocols, look at PM data.
- Bring this back to my school to begin our journey into formative assessment on a consistent basis.
- Continue to support school districts with their goals around formative assessments.
- Look at our literacy benchmark assessment and AIMS web data with our primary teachers and see what we can do in third and fourth grade using similar assessments to inform the instruction.
- To start trying to steer the district away from informative assessments towards formative ones that yield changes in the classroom.
- We're doing it . . . just need to keep pushing forward.

Suggestions or topics for future CNYDAC meetings:

- Presenting data to teachers without intimidation, yet raising levels of concern to the proper level.
- Scoring by benchmarks
- Lesson design
- Keep doing more of this same type of topic and discussion. It seems to be what the group is interested in. The sharing from districts is excellent!
- More on formative assessment
- Love the idea of sharing, triangulation of data that we do.
- Best practice sharing.
- Continue the sharing of district work such as the Phoenix School District – Fosters great conversation.
- Model actual Data Analysis meeting.
- Model creating charts from COGNOS Cubes.
- Growth model
- Can we stay with the Data Warehouse days? It eliminates a trip to the RIC.
- Tricks on how to turnkey at our district

Other:

- Great use of/ good modeling of some effective instructional strategies!
Also awesome modeling of applying SurveyMonkey data to planning!

6. Next Meeting: Proposed date and time – Thursday, March 12, 2009 1:00pm