

**Michigan High School
Initiative
Promising Redesign
Practices
Action Team Report**



Prepared for Dr. Jeremy Hughes, Michigan Department of Education
Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer

June 1, 2006

**Michigan High School Initiative
Promising Redesign Practices Action Team Members**

Wayne Rietberg, Co-Chair	Curriculum Director, Byron Center Public Schools
Gail Shenkman, Co-Chair	Principal, Dearborn High School
Michael A. Bugenski	State Director, Michigan North Central Association
Saundra Carter	Supervisor, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Office of Career and Technical Preparation, Grant Planning & Program Improvement Unit
Nancy Fenton	Co-Director, Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools
Pat Meaux	Education Consultant, Michigan Department of Education, Office of School Improvement
Lee Schleicher	Dean, Washtenaw Technical Middle College
Kathy Sergeant	Associate State Director, Michigan North Central Association
Gary VanKempen	Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Lansing Community College Executive on Loan, Michigan Department of Education
Dan Wilson	Consultant, Michigan Department of Education, Quality Assurance Unit, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services
Diane McMillan	High School Consultant, Michigan Department Education

The Charge of the Action Team

This Action Team was charged with disseminating promising high school redesign practices to educators throughout Michigan. We shaped this charge into two major projects: planning and holding a promising practices conference and producing a website to provide high school educators with information regarding high school redesign practices and their implementation in schools throughout the state. In order to gather information for the website, the team decided to survey high school principals regarding the current implementation of high school promising practices.

Essential Questions for Research and Action

Our guiding question was: How can we help secondary educators find and implement promising practices which assist in high school reform?

The Process

The team held many meetings in order to plan the conference format, select a keynote speaker, gather ideas for breakout sessions, and plan the actual day. The Promising Redesign Practices Conference was held at Dearborn High School on Friday, May 26. 341 educators from across the state attended this day-long event. The conference materials are attached to this report.

We also met to review and discuss the proposed survey document. The National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) developed and this action team has approved a survey of high school principals to identify promising practices implemented in Michigan. It will be administered this September via the Internet and NSSE will provide an analysis of the results. From that data, the committee plans to construct a website.

Recommendations

- The committee recommends follow-up conferences both at other locations to avail more Michigan high school educators the opportunity to share ideas as well as opportunities to explore various practices in depth.
- The committee recommends developing and implementing an effective method for informing high school educators of future conferences and of the proposed website.

Opportunities and Challenges

The conference provided a wonderful opportunity for the exploration of high school redesign practices. The challenge will be to continue and expand this professional development.

Next Action Steps

- Evaluate the conference and make recommendations for future professional development opportunities
- Administer and analyze the survey
- Construct the website

Appendices

- Conference materials
- Survey document

Dear High School Reform Conference Attendees,

The Arab American National Museum would like to invite you to tour the Museum's exhibits for free. You will be given a chance to explore our permanent exhibits as well as visit our Museum Library and Resource Center and our Gift Store.

The AANM, which opened its doors to the public in May 2005, is the first and only museum dedicated to Arab-American history and culture. Our mission is *to document, preserve, celebrate, and educate the public on the history, life, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans. We serve as a resource to enhance the knowledge and understanding about Arab Americans and their presence in the United States.*

This invitation will provide you with an opportunity to learn about the national Arab-American experience through the Museum's permanent exhibits. Of the Museum's two permanent installations, the first focuses on the theme of origins, giving visitors an overview of the cultural and historical background of the Arab world. The second exhibit, occupying the entire second floor, is divided into three sections: *Coming to America* examines the history of Arab-American immigration since 1500, with special emphasis on specific waves of immigration since the 1880s. *Living in America* reflects the life of Arab Americans at different time periods, and examines such topics as family life, religion, work, and leisure. Finally, *Making an Impact* focuses on organizations and individuals who have impacted American history and culture.

The AANM's Education Department offers guided tours of the Museum's exhibits and conducts on and off-site cultural competency workshops for students, teachers and professionals. Through our off-site workshops we provide information similar to what is found in the Museum to those unable to come to our location.

Another cultural activity that brings students into the Museum is our *Craft Saturdays*. Elementary students from the community come to the Museum to create crafts through which they learn about Arab-American life and culture.

The Museum hours are as follows:

Monday & Tuesday	closed
Wednesday, Friday & Saturday	10:00am – 6:00pm
Thursday	10:00am – 8:00pm
Sunday	12:00 – 5:00pm

We look forward to seeing you.

The Arab American National Museum
 Tel: 313-582-AANM
 Fax: 313-582-1086

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**Michigan High School Initiative
Promising Redesign Practices Conference
Dearborn High School
May 26, 2006**

Agenda

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. | Registration and Breakfast
<i>Auditorium lobby and cafeteria</i> |
| 8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. | Welcome and Introductions
Wayne Rietberg and Gail Shenkman , Co-Chairs,
Michigan High School Initiative Promising Practices Action Team
Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D. , Deputy Superintendent and
Chief Academic Officer, Michigan Department of Education
John Burl Artis, Ph.D. , Superintendent, Dearborn Public Schools
<i>Auditorium</i> |
| 8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | Keynote
Dr. Tim Westerberg , School Improvement Coach and
former Principal, Littleton High School, Littleton, Colorado
<i>Auditorium</i> |
| 9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Break |
| 10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. | 1st Breakout Session
<i>Various locations</i> |
| 10:55 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | 2nd Breakout Session
<i>Various locations</i> |
| 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | Lunch
<i>Cafeteria</i> |
| 12:45 p.m. – 1:35 p.m. | 3rd Breakout Session
<i>Cafeteria</i> |
| 1:35 p.m. – 1:50 p.m. | Break and Afternoon Snack
<i>Cafeteria</i> |
| 1:50 p.m. – 2:40 p.m. | 4th Breakout Session
<i>Various locations</i> |
| 2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | Optional Table Talk Debriefing
<i>Cafeteria</i> |

Table Talks
2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Cafeteria

Tables will be labeled with the following themes. You are invited to join the conversations or meet as a building or district team. Thank you for attending the conference!

9th Grade Interventions

Mathematics Instruction for All Students

Secondary-Post Secondary Connections

Career Technical Education

Alternative Delivery of Instruction

Professional Learning Communities

Building Relationships

Keynote Presentation

Dr. Tim Westerberg

The Leadership Challenge: Closing the Gap between Promising Practices and Common Practices in Michigan's High Schools

From President Bush and Bill Gates to the Cherry Commission and new state graduation requirements the message is the same—high schools in Michigan and across the nation have to change, and school- and district-level leaders and leadership teams will be held accountable for making those changes. “Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships” is the catchphrase of this movement, and the common expectation across the country is that all students graduate from high school college-ready, without remediation. This is expected to happen, in most cases, with existing or even shrinking resources. Ah, there’s nothing like a good challenge to stimulate thoughts of courageous leadership, or early retirement.

The leadership challenge for Michigan’s high schools today is to close the gap between what research and common sense tell us are promising practices for increasing student achievement and the common and sometimes counterproductive practices found in our school. In his keynote address, Dr. Westerberg will use personal experience and humor to highlight what works in high school reform and the leadership challenges that accompany those initiatives. The goal of the session is for participants to leave with a sense of direction and enthusiasm for leading high school reform in their communities. Recycling bins for discarded early retirement application forms will be available in the lobby.

Dr. Tim Westerberg
School Improvement Coach
Dillon, CO
Westerberg_1@msn.com

Tim Westerberg served as a high school principal for twenty-six years, the last twenty of which were at Littleton High School in Littleton, Colorado (1985-2005). Prior to entering school administration, Dr. Westerberg taught social studies and coached at the high school level in Illinois and in Iowa. Westerberg earned his B.S. and M.A. degrees from the University of Iowa and his Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Iowa State University.

In addition to his work as a teacher and administrator, Dr. Westerberg has been active in a variety of school transformation, staff development, and leadership training initiatives in Colorado, across the nation, and internationally. From 1994 to 1996 Westerberg served on the NASSP/Carnegie Foundation Commission on the Restructuring of the American High School which produced the seminal report, *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution*, and he played a significant role in the development of *Breaking Ranks II* which was released in February of 2004. Other recent professional activities include serving as a site evaluator for the US Department of Education's New American High Schools project, an IDEA '97 trainer for the National Association of Secondary School Principals, a member of the National Staff Development Council's Results-Based Staff Development Initiative, a member of ASCD's *What Works In Schools* staff development cadre, President of the Colorado Association of School Executives, member of the Colorado Commission for High School Improvement, and Interim Executive Director of The Alliance for Quality Teaching.

Dr. Westerberg has received numerous awards in recognition of his service to the education profession, including being named as one of four finalists for the NASSP/Met Life Principal of the Year program in 1994, the Honor Administrator Award by the Colorado Music Educators Association in 1998, and the Department Service Award by the Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals in 1999.

Breakout Session #1 – 10:00 – 10:50 a.m.

Closing the Gap, Continued

Presenter: Tim Westerberg, School Improvement Coach and Keynote Speaker

Room: Auditorium

This breakout session will use a question-and-answer format to expand upon school reform initiatives highlighted in Dr. Westerberg's keynote address. This will also be a good time to share specific leadership strategies for leading the change process in the context of the realities of today's high schools.

The NEW ELA High School Content Expectations

Presenter: Elaine Weber, Language Arts Consultant, Macomb ISD

Room: Media Center

REPEATED during Breakout Session #2

Learn the structure of the new ELA HSCEs and how the standards will function in the high school English classroom. Review the proposed framework that describes English at each grade level 9 to 12. Experience the thinking behind the thematic unit development.

Career Focused Education Program at Lake Orion High School

Presenters: Chris Bell, Assistant Principal, Lake Orion High School and Janette Jones, Counseling Career Coordinator, Lake Orion High School

Room: A8

Lake Orion High School has implemented a team based career education program. Teams include a freshman/sophomore transition team, junior/senior transition team, career counseling team, seminar team, and an administrative support team. The required culminating senior year includes a student portfolio and an exit presentation.

Designing a Ninth Grade Academy

Presenters: Sue Bernys, Ninth Grade Academy Lead Teacher, Dearborn High School, Diane Bridges, Teacher, Dearborn High, Catherine Kurtgis, Teacher, Dearborn High, Dave Mifsud, Teacher, Dearborn High, and Chris Minor, Teacher, Dearborn High

Room: A7

This presentation will focus on strategies that can be used to design a ninth grade academy. Team members from the Dearborn High School Ninth Grade Academy will discuss: resistance to the program, staffing, common prep hours, location in the building, and various interventions for working with at-risk students. It is only our first year, but our student failures have decreased and the atmosphere of our building has improved.

ATLAS Study Groups – A Means to Build Social Capital and Student Achievement

Presenters: Christine Lund, Senior Associate, ATLAS Communities and Doris Perry, Midwest Regional Director, ATLAS Communities

Room: A14

One of the most important issues in high school reform is the design and implementation of professional learning communities. These professional learning communities when in their optimal state exude high levels of trust, commitment and collegial interactions. This quality is defined as social capital. High levels of social capital have been associated with student achievement. ATLAS Communities was recognized in a 2006 research report by the American Institute for Research (AIR) for its demonstrated ability to develop social capital. During this session, ATLAS will engage you in conversation and present you with its professional development framework that will validate how ATLAS Study Groups build social capital and increase student achievement.

Leading a Culture of Change: Freshman Achievement Teams

Presenters: Mark A. Williams, Principal, Standish-Sterling Central High School and Pete Ingerasson, School Reform Coach, Coalition of Essential Schools

Room: G3

This presentation will go through the steps put into place within a high school to promote a culture change within the staff and students. The creation of a Freshman Achievement Team (FAT) with a teacher mentor, beginning the implementation of a Professional Learning Community in the building, along with other strategies are helping to change the way we deal with each other and with the students in our high school.

How Can You Bring Your Math Test Scores Up?

Presenters: Carol Clark and Pat Talbott, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Office of Career & Technical Preparation

Room: G4

In 2003, the United States Department of Education funded the Math-in-CTE Experiment through the National Research Center of Career and Technical Education. The two-year project is complete and results are exciting. The Office of Career and Technical Preparation staff is using the model to develop lesson plans in 16 career clusters through task forces. The first three products are nearly complete. The task forces consist of academic educators, CTE educators, administrators, counselors, post-secondary representatives, employers, and curriculum directors. This presentation will outline project results, current practices, and future initiatives.

Leading Change in a Time of Turbulence

Presenter: John Artis, Superintendent, Dearborn Public Schools

Room: G7

The clarion call for high school reform, renewal, or even transformation has been heard often over the past 100 years. In this newest call for reform, leaders face significant philosophical, technological, and cultural changes and must engage a reluctant audience (staff, parents and community, and students) to meet the call for change. This session will examine the leadership behaviors necessary to lead such change initiatives.

Restorative Discipline

Presenter: Bill Sower, Trainer, International Institute for Restorative Practices

Room: G8

Conventional school discipline and behavior management methods were designed for the world of the 1950s...a world that no longer exists! This workshop will introduce you to Restorative Practices and other reliable tools that you can use immediately with your students. Learn how to: reduce suspensions, improve accountability and behavior, encourage better "connectedness" in your classroom and school, stop bullying and improve student culture with Peacemaking Circles, and build effective partnerships with resistant parents.

NovaNET and Competency-Based Credit: Using Digital Solutions for High School Credit and Credit Recovery

Presenter: Nancy Paris, Community Education Supervisor, Howell Public Schools

Room: G9

This presentation will describe how NovaNET can be utilized 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for high school credit and credit recovery purposes, discuss the implications of HQT status/NCLB for a NovaNET program, tips for utilizing NovaNET to maximum capacity, and strategies on making the program for both regular-ed and alternative-ed students. Other ideas for the use of NovaNET will also be offered.

Breakout Session #2 – 10:55 – 11:45 a.m.**Using Michigan Merit Exam/ACT Data: Ensuring Students are College Ready****Presenter: Michael P. McKinney, Consultant, Elementary and Secondary Services, ACT****Room: Auditorium****REPEATED during Breakout Session #3**

This session will provide the most up-to-date information on the Michigan Merit Exam, to include the ACT Plus Writing and illustrate how school districts use the assessment data and information that speak to individual readiness and guide choices through ACT's EPAS programs. Helping schools to improve, our EPAS system aids educators and students with an integrated, longitudinal approach to school transitions. EPAS programs include: The ACT—America's most widely accepted college entrance exam; EXPLORE for 8th and 9th graders to identify strengths and explore the world of work; and PLAN a "pre-ACT" test and a reexamination of interests and skills for 10th graders.

The NEW ELA High School Content Expectations**Presenter: Elaine Weber, Language Arts Consultant, Macomb ISD****Room: Media Center****REPEATED during Breakout Session #1**

Learn the structure of the new ELA HSCEs and how the standards will function in the high school English classroom. Review the proposed framework that describes English at each grade level 9 to 12. Experience the thinking behind the thematic unit development.

Coalition of Essential Schools**Presenters: Shug Brandell and Nancy Fenton, Co-Directors, Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools****Room: A7**

The Coalition of Essential Schools was one of the originating groups to advocate for small teacher study groups led by teacher-leaders. In these groups teachers work together to develop a strong professional learning community where sharing, support, collaboration and reflection are the norm with the explicit focus being on student learning. A major activity in these groups is the study of student work to improve teacher practice. When teachers study student work it has a great impact on both rigor and relevance in the classroom and leads to greater student learning. In this workshop we will have an opportunity to review samples of student work, looking for evidence of rigor and relevance.

Building Mathematics Courses around Student Skills**Presenter: Nicole Garcia, Mathematics Instructor, Washtenaw Technical Middle College****Room: A14**

For five years, Washtenaw Technical Middle College has been building their mathematics courses each year to meet the needs of the incoming cohort. While the starting point for each class may be different, the outcomes for all students are the same. Minimally, each student must complete one college level mathematics course. The testing methods, course building strategies, and expected outcomes will be shared in this session along with examples of data collected that indicates a need for this type of program.

Link Crew: A Freshman Transition Program**Presenter: Kevin Spier, AP Economics Teacher & Link Coordinator, Thurston High School****Room: A8****REPEATED during Breakout Session #4**

Nationwide educators are beginning to realize the power of a positive transition process. For the last 15 years, Link Crew has proven an effective model for providing a powerful transition process in high schools across the nation. By utilizing a powerful orientation curriculum and leveraging upperclassmen as leaders and mentors, Link Crew is a proven tool for increasing attendance, improving climate, reducing discipline referrals, and raising ninth grade academic success. This session will provide an overview of the Link Crew process, share pieces of the curriculum and immerse participants in the philosophy of the program.

Teachers Mentoring Students**Presenter: Erin Trame, Science Instructor/Academic Advisor, Washtenaw Technical****Middle College****Room: G3**

Washtenaw Technical Middle College provides students with significant adult mentors through an effective and functional mentoring program. Teacher mentors work closely with students to ensure success, expand the learning experience, and effectively bridge the secondary to postsecondary transition. This presentation will describe the development and continued evolution of the mentoring program in existence at this nationally recognized school, which values and embraces rigor, relevance, and relationships.

Career Awareness Curriculum: Take Your Students to the Next Level**Presenter: Michelle Sharp, Principal/Curriculum Director, Pewamo-Westphalia****Community Schools****Room: G4**

In this global economy, students need to be prepared not only in the academic arenas but also for post high school endeavors. In this session, you will learn effective strategies in taking your high school students to the next level in their lives using venues already established in your schools. The goal of this presentation is to ensure attendants can take curriculum ideas and ready to use resources to their schools following the conference.

Mott Middle College: Dropout Prevention Specialty School**Presenters: Chery S. Wagonlander, Principal, Mott Middle College, Mary Lavengood,****Assistant Superintendent, Genesee Intermediate School District, Scott Jenkins, Vice****President, Mott Community College****Room: G7**

Mott Middle College is a drop-out prevention, general education high school located on the campus of Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan. This program serves all 21 public school districts in Genesee County. It is operated by the Genesee Intermediate School District. The program specializes in providing a fresh start for high potential, high at-risk youth. Three years ago, the school redesigned into an early college and serves as a replication site for both middle and early colleges across the nation. Course content, instructional practice, school governance, student support services, personnel, scheduling and college collaboration form the foundation around which educational intervention results in successful student reengagement. Mott Middle College has graduated 12 classes with stunning higher education results.

Where's the Money? Finding the Resources for High School Redesign**Presenter: Dale Glynn, 2005 MASSP Principal of the Year, Lansing Everett High School****Room: G8**

Dale will give strategies to finance the resources for high school redesign including scheduling, staffing, community partnerships, grant writing, working with teachers' unions, support staff, and district office. Dale has led redesign efforts in his school including innovative course offerings, magnet school-within-a-school, smaller learning communities, 9th grade academy, Mid-Day school program, flexible scheduling, mentoring programs, just to name a few.

Potential Directions in High Schools of the Future**Presenter: Chuck Breiner, Superintendent, Howell Public Schools****Room: G9**

This session will advance new dynamics in meeting shifting student needs in the high school years. Topics will include uses of the variables of time and schedule, place, space, personnel, instructional methodology, philosophy, school culture, assessment, collaborative models / processes, rubrics, and credit as these relate to new frames of rigor, relationships, relevance, and rethinking. The session will also provide a discussion of these tools against a backdrop that includes a critical examination of current practice.

Breakout Session #3 – 12:45 – 1:35 p.m.**Using Michigan Merit Exam/ACT Data: Ensuring Students are College Ready****Presenter: Michael P. McKinney, Consultant, Elementary and Secondary Services, ACT****Room: Auditorium****REPEATED during Breakout Session #2**

This session will provide the most up-to-date information on the Michigan Merit Exam including the ACT Plus Writing. EPAS programs include: The ACT—America's most widely accepted college entrance exam; EXPLORE for 8th and 9th graders to identify strengths and explore the world of work; and PLAN a "pre-ACT" test and a reexamination of interests and skills for 10th graders. The EPAS aids educators and students with an integrated, longitudinal approach to school transitions.

The NEW Math High School Content Expectations**Presenter: Ruth Ann Hodges, Math Consultant, Michigan Department of Education****Room: Media Center****REPEATED during Breakout Session #4**

Learn more about the Mathematics High School Content Expectations (HSCE) including their development, structure and implications for instruction.

Meeting the Challenges of the High School Content Expectations in Mathematics for All Students**Presenter: Rose Martin, Secondary Teacher (retired), National Science Foundation****Mathematics Consultant, Lecturer, University of Michigan Dearborn****Room: A7**

"How do you teach math with Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships for All High School Students?" Experience instructional strategies that will motivate all students to achieve success, and enable them to make connections across the curriculum in other core content areas as well as CTE pathways. Explore math curricula that provide opportunities for different instructional approaches.

Professional Learning Communities

Presenters: Patricia P. Benson, Director, Michigan Schools in the Middle and Carolyn McKanders, Coach Trainer, Michigan Schools in the Middle

Room: A8

This session will define and describe professional learning communities (PLCs), with particular attention to the ways in which implementation can benefit high school teachers and students. Recent research strongly supports the concept that the best professional development for teachers occurs when small groups of colleagues meet regularly to examine standards and benchmarks, plan effective lessons, critique student work, and solve common teaching problems. Schools who have implemented PLCs have demonstrated much higher rates of teacher efficacy and student learning. This workshop will focus on the five characteristics successful PLCs: a shared vision of excellence, continuous and collaborative learning among staff, regular visitation and review of classrooms and student work, and building human capital and leadership capacity within the community.

Establishing Rigor, Relevance and Relationships Using Dr. Lorraine Monroe's Blackboard Configuration

Presenters: Irma J. Hamilton, Educational Consultant and Executive Coach, New Vision Consulting Services and Joyce Beasley, Educational Consultant and Executive Coach, The BBP Group

Room: A14

Dr. Lorraine Monroe is the founder of the Lorraine Monroe Leadership Institute and the creator of the Blackboard Configuration. She is the former principal of Frederick Douglass High School in Harlem where under her leadership, 96% of students went on to colleges and universities. Her methodology consists of a set of reasonable rules and regulations with consistent consequences and a framework for instructional delivery. The Blackboard Configuration is a compilation of best practices for instructional delivery focused on student achievement.

Teaching and Assessing Life Skills

Presenter: Victoria Swanson James, Instructor, Washtenaw Technical Middle College

Room: G3

This session will focus on one school's solution to the universal problem of nonacademic skill preparation. The Washtenaw Technical Middle College developed a schoolwide curriculum to promote a student culture that models successful learning and work habits. Developmental issues, structure, pros and cons, and sample curriculum activities will be shared.

Early College Direct Credit and Dual Enrollment Program

Presenters: Deedee Stakley, Coordinator, Early College Direct Credit and Dual Enrollment Program, Lake Michigan College and Lisa Augustyniak

Room: G4

High Schools that Work: A Research-Based Model for Improving Student Achievement

Presenter: Heather Boggs-Sass, School Improvement Consultant, Southern Regional Education Board

Room: G7

High Schools That Work is the largest and oldest of the Southern Regional Education Board's school improvement initiatives for high school and middle grades leaders and teachers. More than 1,200 *HSTW* sites in 32 states are using the framework of *HSTW* goals and Key Practices to raise student achievement. This program will describe the *HSTW* model and the ten key practices that form the foundation of the model. Participants will review data and best practices from high performing sites and analyze how the model contributes to improved performance for all groups of students.

Panel Discussion – 9th Grade Interventions**Leader: Sue Bernys, Lead Teacher, Dearborn High School 9th Grade Academy****Panel Participants: Dearborn High School, Standish-Sterling High School, Lansing Everett High School, Howell High School****Room: G8**

The panel will discuss the challenges and solutions that their schools have found in building success for their students during the freshman year.

Breakout Session #4 – 1:50 – 2:40 p.m.**The NEW Math High School Content Expectations****Presenter: Ruth Ann Hodges, Math Consultant, Michigan Department of Education****Room: Media Center****REPEATED during Breakout Session #3**

Learn more about the Mathematics High School Content Expectations (HSCE) including their development, structure and implications for instruction.

Link Crew: A Freshman Transition Program**Presenter: Kevin Spier, AP Economics Teacher and Link Coordinator, Thurston High School****Room: A8****REPEATED during Breakout Session #2**

Nationwide educators are beginning to realize the power of a positive transition process. For the last 15 years, Link Crew has proven an effective model for providing a powerful transition process in high schools across the nation. By utilizing a powerful orientation curriculum and leveraging upperclassmen as leaders and mentors, Link Crew is a proven tool for increasing attendance, improving climate, reducing discipline referrals, and raising ninth grade academic success. This session will provide an overview of the Link Crew process, share pieces of the curriculum and immerse participants in the philosophy of the program.

Integrating Distance Learning**Presenter: Kevin Renko, Lead Teacher/Counselor, Dearborn Virtual Academy****Room: A7**

The Dearborn Virtual Academy has taken distance learning and made it into its own unique program by making it personal and updated. The results have been very promising and helped this program earn a national award in 2004.

Giving High School Students Voice with Literature Circles**Presenters: Kathryn Dingwall, Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools, Melvina Gillespie, Teacher, and Tara Rice, Teacher****Room: A14**

Join us as we look at the possibilities of Literature Circles as an exciting exploration of text in both language arts and content classrooms. You will learn techniques to help you set up, manage, and assess literature circles as well as strategies that help kids challenge their thinking and find their voice as they explore text.

Post Secondary Articulation in Relation to Rigor and High School Reform**Presenter: Karen Pohja, Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Office of Career & Technical Preparation****Room: G3**

Articulation in relation with HS Reform and Rigor for students can be a means to help improve a student's successful transition to post-secondary and further training. In this session articulation "Tools to Use" will be shared with participants through hand-outs and examples.

A Team Approach to Problem Based Learning

Presenters: Herm Boatin, Lead Teacher, Dearborn Center for Math, Science and Technology (DCMST), Karen Pikula, Teacher, DCMST, Diana Hoehn, Teacher, DCMST

Room: G4

An interdisciplinary team of teachers present a problem-based two week unit based on student generated research questions. Ninth grade student teams organized by research questions investigate chemical, physical or biological aspects of local watershed dynamics utilizing appropriate data acquisition technology. Analysis of data involves statistical methods and math models. Culminating presentations by each research team disseminates research outcomes and broadens student knowledge of the watershed for all participants. The success of the instructional unit is founded on: relevant, real world student authored questions, redesign of the unit plan based upon anecdotal evidence of student achievement from previous unit activities, collaborative planning and shared instruction, and effective technology application.

The Michael Berry Center – Broad Career Perspectives

Presenters: Winifred L. Green, Principal, Maggie Maul, Teacher, Dave Roberts, Teacher, Ele Shepherd, Teacher, Jan Hathaway, Teacher, and John Bayerl, Teacher

Room: G7

This presentation will highlight how programs at the Michael Berry Center, the Dearborn School's part day career center, support all three Rs. The programs support rigor and are crosswalked with established state, national, and industry standards. Programs at the career center were identified based on relevance to occupational and labor trends forecast over the next ten years. Center programs are built around relationships between career clusters, the institutions with which we share facilities, postsecondary and business/industrial partners. The Berry Center principal and teachers will share their experiences in developing a career center with a broad perspective.

Panel Discussion – Middle and Early College

Leader: Lee Schleicher, Dean, Washtenaw Technical Middle College

Panel Participants: Washtenaw Technical Middle College, Mott Middle College, and Lake Michigan College

Room: G8

The panel will discuss the college experience they provide to high school students.

The Freshman Campus – Howell High School

Presenters: Lawrence Cowger, Principal, Howell High School Freshman Campus and Cindy Perlman, Teacher, Freshman Focus

Room: G9

Howell's Freshman Campus offers an environment where students can more successfully transition to the high school experience. By incorporating some affective qualities of a middle school environment, students are less overwhelmed by the typical shock that occurs when students are thrust into the high school realm where rigor, responsibility, and rules reign. The Freshman Campus operates with two four-person teams to facilitate smaller learning communities. This year we offered a new course called "Freshman Focus" to reinforce the soft skills and teach students how they think, behave, and learn.

Our successes are attributed to the isolation of these students so that they are nurtured and protected as they transition to the high school expectations.

