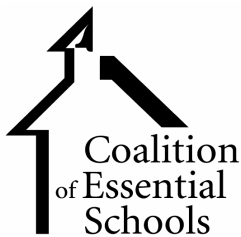


Central States Center for School Reform

11th Annual Spring Forum a Great Success



Spring Forum was held the weekend of April 4-5 at Tan-Tar-A Golf Club and Spa, with approximately 90 persons in attendance.

The theme of the 11th Spring Forum was What School Should Be. A new component to Spring Forum were teacher displays presented in a gallery walk. Student displays from the Student Leadership Institute were on display from Northgate Middle School and Fulton Academy. Students were in attendance to explain

their project and the outcome of their action research.

The event began with a dinner on Friday evening. Afterward Michele Baldwin, North Kansas City Schools Staff Development Department, led the group through an entertaining activity that meshed what they wanted school "to be" and "not be" with humor. Then the groups decided where learning was going on within their schools and what was keeping learning from occurring through-

out the school.

Saturday began with a continental breakfast, workshops and roundtables. The keynote speaker at the luncheon was Dr. Jody Wood, Associate Superintendent of Wentzville Schools. Dr. Wood talked about active learning and demonstrated examples of how that could be accomplished in classrooms.

Evaluations show that most attendees were happy with the Spring Forum location and format.

Inside this issue:

New Mark Middle Makes Advances in Differentiated Instruction	2
Turning Points National Leadership Conference	2
Lewis and Clark Middle Focus on At-Risk Readers	3
Collaboration Catchin' On at Maple Park	3
Lexington Middle Enjoys First Year as Turning Points Grant School	4
Bolivar Middle Keeps Highways and Airlines Busy	4
Northgate Middle Decides on Late Start for 2003-2004	5
Thomas Jefferson Middle	5
Upcoming Events	Back

Advisory Board Retreat

The Board of Directors retreat will be held June 10th and 11th at Golden Oaks Education Center in Kansas City North. As Cathy Crist, North Kansas City High School, Board of Directors Chairperson recently stated, "This meeting is critical in determining the direction and survival of the Center." Linda Stenger, St. Joseph Central High School and vice chairperson, will lead the second half of the meeting as the new Chairperson.

Other new officers are Tim Mattson, principal of Eastgate Middle School, Vice Chairperson; Mike Ramirez, Oak Park High School,

Treasurer; and Ginny Sampson, Lewis and Clark Middle School, Secretary. Virginia Ray, Dr. Scotty Scott and one other person yet to be determined, will serve as regional representatives.

This is a difficult time for most not-for-profit organizations. The economy has affected donations from major funders as well as siphoning off federal money for other uses.

One big issue will be determining the Center's affiliation with CES National. Another issue will be restructuring the Center, in alignment with the strategic

plan.

"Every school who is a member or affiliated school is welcome to send a representative to the meeting", states Glenda Moehlman, Center Director. "It is an important time in the life of the Center, and input is needed from all schools to make the services and trainings the Center conducts, as relevant to school needs as possible."

Please contact Susan Abbott at **816-413-6068** by May 30th to make reservations, if a representative from your building will be attending.

New Mark Middle School Makes Advances in Differentiated Instruction

As school draws to a close, it is a good time to reflect on our accomplishments. At New Mark, our focus on differentiated Instruction has defined our year. Our professional development activities have been directed to a greater understanding of DI and how important it is to success in the classroom. We have benefited from opportunities that would not have been possible without Turning Points, and we want to share just a few of those with you.

Guest presenters this year included Carol Toney, New Mark's own STARR teacher. Her topics included differentiated instruction, motivating students, and layered curriculum. STARR teacher, Kathy Ferrel provided up to date information about how the brain works, and what that means for classroom teachers.

During our NKCS D in-service day we had the opportunity to attend a workshop by Carolyn Chapman who co-

authored the book we have been studying, Differentiated Instruction, One Size Does Not Fit All. She provided examples of the strategies we had been reading about, and strengthened our understanding of DI.

All of our efforts came together as evidence of New Mark's focus on collaboration and differentiated instruction was on display March 18. New Mark hosted an unusual site visit. New Mark visited New Mark. Our goal was to locate examples of differentiated instruction in our own school. Teachers opened their classrooms to their colleagues who recorded examples of DI on 3x5 cards. Using a "scavenger hunt" format, the cards were collected and entered into a drawing for prizes. As cards were drawn, staff members shared their observations, and received prizes for locating examples of practices we had been reading about. Teachers whose classroom demonstrated DI also won. Many

teachers remarked that they had never before had an opportunity to see their colleagues teach, and that they came away from the experience with renewed respect for the talented professionals in their own building. We had fun and enjoyed an interesting way to assess our learning.

Finally, we are very proud that The Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) has selected Clark Mershon, Principal at New Mark Middle School, as the 2003 Missouri Middle School Principal of the Year. The selection was made from more than 400 middle school principals throughout the state of Missouri. Not only is this a great honor for Mr. Mershon, but is also an honor for New Mark.

We feel that the year has been successful, and that we have made significant progress in improving education for all students. We are looking forward to continuing our journey forward next year.

The Central States Center for School Reform can individualize staff development programs for each school, emphasizing improved student achievement and adequate yearly progress.

Turning Points National Leadership Conference

National Turning Points Leadership Conference was held February 5,6,7, 2003 in Baltimore, Maryland. CSCSR sent 34 participants. The keynote speaker was Dr. Nancy Doda. Eastgate Middle School was recognized as a national Turning Points Demonstration school.

Presenters from CSCSR in-

cluded: Dr. Vicki Baker and Dr. Tom Cummings on District Capacity, Dr. Bob Steffes on Empowering Teachers, Tim Mattson, Ellen Nelson, Rhonda Foote, on Continuing the Work, Kevin Lowery and Chuck Garner on Establishing a Culture where Students Want to Learn, and Lewis and Clark teachers, Denise Schebaum, Jeanne Nelson,

Jackie Twehus, and Charlotte Dudenhoffer on Literacy.

The Conference format followed good instruction. Breakout sessions followed the keynote speaker where people debriefed by area (principal, teacher, coach, etc.).

Dr. Doda followed up on questions from these breakouts in large group. We also had wrap-up

meetings at the conference conclusion by Center and then as whole group. Participant feedback was very positive. This is a small conference, but provided the opportunity to network with others and obtain materials to help in reform work. Missouri was well represented and participants have already started talking about presentations for next year.

Lewis and Clark Middle Focus on At-Risk Readers

The focus at Lewis and Clark Middle School this year was on literacy. Teachers met during their team time each week to discuss reading strategies to help students recognized as at-risk readers. To decide whom the at-risk readers were, teachers gave the SRI (Scholastics Reading Inventory) to their classes in the fall. The test showed who was reading below grade level and who was reading far below grade level.

All sixth grade students who tested below grade level, were administered the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) by Joetta Beaver. The test consists of using miscue-analysis (running records) and questioning about the story

to find specific needs these students had. Once these students were tested, individual summaries of the test with instructional suggestions were given to the teachers. Then students who were considered "far below" grade level in seventh grade were tested. After testing, teachers were again given individual testing summaries with instructional suggestions.

Once all testing was completed at the sixth and seventh grade level, teams began meeting regularly during planning times to discuss strategies to help these struggling readers. Since the DRA identified specific needs, we were able to look at specific strategies to develop these skills. Sources referred to

included Guiding Readers and Writers, by Pinnell and Fountas; video "Guided Reading", by Pinnell and Fountas; Mosaic of Thought, by Ellin O. Keen and Susan Zimmerman; Classroom Instruction that Works, by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock; and the websites Reading Quest.org and Language Arts Cadre 95. High-interest, level appropriate texts for sixth grade at-risk readers were ordered. More students (some new to the school) were tested throughout the year using the DRA as their teachers identified them as at-risk readers.

It was planned to retest at-risk students using the DRA in the spring to show growth. However, because of the lack of time, in sixth

grade, the last couple of months were used to teach teachers miscue-analysis and discuss procedures for the first 6-8 weeks next fall. In seventh grade, teachers did book studies in small groups using a common framework for teaching a new text. This is intended to help all seventh grade reading teachers work towards similar goals per book. It especially helps those teachers that have little background in the teaching of reading.

Book studies, teacher discussions, and classroom modeling are strategies that can be used to help struggling readers. This was the last year of the Turning Points grant for Lewis and Clark Middle, so it was important to help our strug-

Collaboration is Catchin' On at Maple Park

In the spirit of *Fish* Maple Park has chosen a positive attitude of collaboration this year. We have focused on the **how** in three areas – teaming, differentiated instruction, and balanced assessment. Not only did Terri, our Turning Points coach, share ideas, but we also invited S.T.A.R.R. teachers who provided many strategies. Teachers tried new tactics such as layering curriculum, cubing, and flip books in their classrooms, and then we discussed these applications. During time in their Learning Com-

munities, teachers have looked at what they are doing in their classrooms and worked together to design units. Of course, the beneficiaries of all this collaboration are the students. In Maple Park classrooms, students are excited about learning!

Maple Park's leadership team is hardworking and shares responsibilities. Their *fishy* attitude is catching! Everyone participated in preparing for and hosting our site visit by Lexington and Thomas Jefferson. The visiting teachers provided

us with excellent insight into our programs and practices. Many teachers have gone to conferences and shared their experiences with others. Collaboration among our Turning Points schools has been such a plus for us. Not only did we learn from our site visit, but we also gained a lot from visiting Lewis and Clark and Willard for their site visits. Lewis and Clark has a student leadership program that we would like to investigate for our students. A group of teachers also visited Bolivar and decided to pilot their

Student Privilege Program with the Maple Park 7th graders for the rest of this year. Students qualify on a weekly basis by having all assignments, no discipline referrals, and no F's. They earn time to spend with friends and enjoy snacks. The leadership team studied the Benchmark Turning Points book using Critical Friends reading strategies and will repeat this activity with the rest of the staff. Many felt they had a much better understanding of our focus. Collaboration is "catchin' on!"

Has your school remitted membership or affiliation fees to the
Central States Center for School Reform for 2003-2004?
If not, now is the time!

Lexington Middle School Enjoys First Year as Turning Points School

Lexington Middle School has enjoyed the benefits of being a first year Turning Points School. Under the guidance of the Leadership Team and Dorothy Winslow, Principal, the school made great advances. Many teachers were able to attend state and national conferences. Visiting other Turning Points schools also enabled teachers to gain new ideas and techniques to use in their own classrooms.

For the first time this year, teachers were divided into teams. They set up their team procedures and also worked on interpersonal skills. They discussed how to be effective teams and have practiced these points throughout the year. They have learned how to work as a group to benefit their students and how to support each other in their classrooms.

An activity was also

done this year to assess the personality and work habits of each teacher. This activity helped teachers to understand each other better and to be accepting of others thoughts, ideas and ways of doing things.

The teachers watched the FISH video and read the book this year. Teachers then set some goals for themselves for this year.

A team notebook was developed for each

team. Many times teachers found that there were many ideas about the way something should be done, but nothing was written down—therefore a notebook was developed which should be of benefit to new and veteran teachers in the district. Next year, the school will be studying differentiated instruction and how to become better teachers. They look forward to being a second year Turning Points school, and all the benefits that come with it.

Bolivar Middle School Does Their Share to Keep Highways and Airlines Busy

Teachers and administrators at Bolivar Middle School have been exchanging school visits and attending professional networking meetings with other Turning Points middle schools.

The Turning Points Reform Coach has been presenting programs featuring the Turning Points Literacy Model for the entire faculty on the first Wednesday of each month for profes-

sional development. Core teams work with their reform coach on teaching and learning strategies and research.

Teachers and administrators at Bolivar Middle have also been very busy attending and presenting at state and national conferences. Several teachers attended the English conference in Atlanta, Georgia and the Mathematics conference in

San Antonio, Texas. Administrators presented a workshop at the Turning Points National Leadership Conference in Maryland. Administrators and teachers also presented sessions at the 11th Annual Central States Center for School Reform Spring Forum at Tan-Tar-A in April. Several displays featuring interdisciplinary units were included in the Gallery Walk exhibits.

Four teachers will be visiting Radner Middle School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for additional ideas in implementing the principles and practices of Turning Points.

The staff is planning for next year with work on curriculum mapping and interdisciplinary units during the month of May.

Northgate Middle Decides on Late Start for 2003-2004

During the last half of the 2002-2003 school year, Northgate Middle School utilized its Turning Point collaboration time for the following activities. First, they used various reading and discussion strategies to finish the book study of How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms by Carol Ann Tomlinson. Then Carol Toney, STARR teacher, gave a two-day workshop about differentiated instruction. Teachers sharing copies of differentiated instruction activities, lessons,

units, and/or student work they had developed for their classroom instruction followed this. After the District staff development day in February, time was devoted to sharing experiences, reactions, and applications of these workshops.

Next, reading specialist, Rene Comtois, introduced two literacy strategies from McRel, which teachers applied to lessons in their classrooms and shared during Turning Points collaboration time. The

staff also used this time to introduce, discuss, and adopt a school-wide homework policy and an across-the-curriculum writing organizer called the FRAME.

The last Turning Points collaboration time was used for tuning teacher work or sharing differentiated instruction, McRel strategies, or professional articles.

From their discussion of how to continue this valuable time together, the staff agreed to

a late-start day each week next year.

Finally, many teachers submitted teacher and student work and other materials and artifacts that the coordinator and coach spent several hours collating for the school's portfolio. This portfolio, organized around the six Turning Points Practices, was shared with the staff, which became a culminating activity for the three-year collaboration time provided by the Turning Points grant.

Thomas Jefferson Middle Is On the Go

The last few weeks at Thomas Jefferson Middle School were a whirlwind of activity. One of the seventh grade teams, the M-n-Ms, did an end of the year interdisciplinary unit which they have done for several years. After much coaxing, they agreed to present at the Missouri Middle School Conference at Tan-Tar-A. They are also applying to present at the National Middle School Conference in Atlanta. With the Turning Points grant, 17 other teachers also

attended MMSA. The enthusiasm generated by the conference was wonderful!

Staff members were on the go. Roberta Hubbs, Principal, and the reform coach attended the Turning Points National Leadership Conference in Baltimore. In March two teachers, Mrs. Hubbs and the reform coach, attended the National Middle School Association conference in Kansas City. The reform coach shared materials from two of the sessions and

because of that, one team is planning to start portfolios next school year.

Three significant progress visits were made to schools in Chicago, Philadelphia and Raleigh, North Carolina, were made in the spring. Four teachers, Mrs. Hubbs and the reform coach visited Bolivar Middle School to look at their creative scheduling. Another group of teachers was scheduled to visit Bolivar before the school year was over.

The Leadership Team has met often and determined that Differentiated Instruction will be the emphasis for the next school year. Plans are also being made for the summer retreat. It is hoped that many staff members will be able to attend.

After a year of examining our priorities at Thomas Jefferson Middle, we are ready to make a real difference in our school.

Upcoming Events

June

10–11 Board of Directors Meeting
Golden Oaks Educational Center

July

20-23 Turning Points Summer Institute
Elms Hotel,
Excelsior Springs Missouri

21-22 Critical Friends Group
Coaches' Training

November

12 CES Fall Forum
Pre-Conference Sessions

13-15 CES Fall Forum
Columbus, Ohio

Specialists in school advancement

Spring 2003

Central States Center for School Reform
A 501(c)3 corporation
Housed in the North Kansas City School District
Golden Oaks Educational Center
3100 NE 46th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64117

Phone: 816-413-6068
Fax: 816-413-6095
Email: jokerstr@nkcsd.k12.mo.us
