

Reflection on New Educator Training for Barnstable Public Schools -Karen Stonely – Team 6

The New Educator Evaluation training, as designed for Barnstable Public Schools, resulted in an effective training model because of the following factors.

Utilization of the exiting evaluator team of the BDLT as the implementation group allowed the key administrators in the district to be at the heart of the training process. Since this group was designed around the concept of evaluators, they had the background and the understanding to bring to the new process. This was a great choice by our Superintendent. She knew that we needed to learn the material before we could teach it and that this knowledge would form a strong foundation to effectively implement, not only the training, but the entire evaluation process. I believe that the fact we already functioned as a strong group resulted in our ability to learn the material well together and I was impressed how individuals came forward with ways to move the group forward and volunteered to do things like share power points and copy training materials.

The team concept of the Superintendent assigning three diverse members to the training teams allowed the best exchange of experience and ideas in the planning and implementation of the training. Our team functioned very well together, with each of us bringing our own individual strengths and backgrounds. For example, having Maria based in the high school helped with the logistics and her personal organization system for collecting evidence on the four standards and two goals became a practical example to share with our participants during the workshop.

We intentionally created our materials with our participants' involvement and engagement in mind. This is what we ask of our teachers when they design lessons for their own students. However, this was the part that seemed to me the biggest challenge with the vast amount of content to address about the new evaluation system in one shot. I also was not sure how the teachers were viewing the new system or the training day, but I saw a preview the day before the in-service, when our training team was checking out our assigned room and we met a high school teacher who inquired what we were doing. When we told him it was about the in-service tomorrow he said he had no idea what the topic was for the day. We told him, the new educator evaluation, and he said something to the effect – “Oh, yea. I guess my boss is going to be in my room more often.” Walking back to our planning room, our team shared concerned looks and we intensified our focus on ways to make this experience fun and engaging.

I think the final assessment activity that Peggy prepared, with the cut out pieces of the various parts of the process, was an example of how we engaged people, with a focus on content. This was the last activity and the participants worked in groups to assemble the pieces in the right order. They were engaged and competitive, wanting to be the first group to successfully solve the puzzle. Peggy, Maria, and I circulated and checked every group's answers which was a good way to verify their understanding and interact with them in a fun way. We awarded prizes throughout the day, not just for the final challenge. We were pleased that the evaluations reflected our efforts, and that the assessment was particularly noted as a highlight. However, the evaluation

comment that I found the most rewarding was one that complimented us on modeling as we taught the training. I was impressed with how gracious, participatory and positive the teachers were during this in-service.

I am very pleased to have been a part of this process. I know I am better prepared to be a good evaluator after participating in the in-service day preparation and implementation. I think it is an example of our district at our best, in the face of a major change – rising to the occasion by setting high expectations, using our resources most effectively, and adhering to our core values in the face of meeting professional challenges. Thank you, Mary, for your fine leadership in this endeavor. I believe that the training was an effective model to set us all on the right path to use this new evaluation system for improving our practice.