

DREW WRITING PROJECT

Study Groups: Looking at Student Work

Objective: The Drew Writing Project aims to support districts in developing reflective teacher-leaders who share researched best practices with their colleagues.

Background: In order to facilitate teacher inquiry in our partner schools and to promote transitions to site-based leadership, we developed this protocol for the implementation of study groups.

Description of Looking at Student Work Study Group Program: Teachers will deepen their understanding of student performance in writing by examining student work. A National Writing Project teacher consultant will facilitate these sessions using a protocol designed to meet the needs of the district. This program coalesces with work done within respective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). NWP-facilitated Study Groups aim in part to optimize and extend the gains realized by teachers working together in PLCs.

Study Group participants will

- Engage in collective inquiry into their practice by
 - Analyzing student work
 - Determining effective strategies to facilitate learning
 - Evaluating student progress
- Recognize trends in student work
- Focus on transforming teaching through dialogue and reflection
- Set personal learning goals
- Reflect upon and discuss instructional practices
- Listen carefully and share ideas in a collegial setting

Rationale:

Study groups promote teacher leadership and support teacher inquiry in the following ways:

- Students learn more when the educators who serve them work collaboratively rather than in isolation (DuFour, R., DuFour, R. and Eaker, R., 2008).
- Study groups provide an environment in which teachers can think and talk about their classroom practices and work together to improve instructional practices (Tichenor and Heinsm 2000).
- Study groups encourage teachers to reflect on how their instructional practices impact student outcomes (Buysee, Sparkman & Wesley, 2003).
- Study groups assist teachers in their exploration of current research in education (Murphy 1992).
- Study groups support teachers as they revise and refine instructional practices (Barab and Duffy, 2000).
- Study groups promote positive interaction among staff members (DeBlieu, 2002; Sanacore, 1993).
- Study groups transform teaching through dialogue and reflection and create a sense of community among teachers (Birchak, et al., 1998).