

Curriculum

- The implementation of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics is required of all school districts for the 2014-2015 school year. We have begun the implementation and will be using 2013-2014 as our pilot year.
 - Teachers have been working very hard to design units, lessons, and assessments.
 - Staff meetings were held during the August Inservice to answer teacher questions, provide clarification, and review the role of the pacing guide, essential question, learning targets, and assessments (formative and summative).
 - There will always be ongoing work to develop instructional components and assessments.
 - 21st Century learning requirements have shifted the textbook to a secondary role.
 - Benchmarking sessions are set for ELA and Math.

Assessment

- PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening):
 - PALS will be in the second year of administration to Kindergarten students and the first year of administration to 4K and first grade students (as required by recent legislative action).
 - The Department of Public Instruction defines a fall testing window for each grade and we select dates from within that window for the local administration.
 - Teachers are presently doing online training and other required preparations.
- WKCE (Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination)
 - This year's testing window begins October 28 and initial preparations have begun.
- Understanding and utilizing multiple forms of data (i.e. classroom, formal district assessment, formal state assessment) for informed instructional decisions, will be a strong focus this year. We can give our best and focused help to students when we clearly understand their needs and their strengths.
- School Report Cards are in their second year in Wisconsin as a part of the accountability system. District Report Cards have been issued for the first time this year. These documents are available on the DPI website as of 9/17/13. Growth, in addition to achievement, is an important measure of success.
- WISEdash is a data warehouse containing useful district information regarding assessment results, attendance, graduation rates, post-secondary attendance, etc. I am working with district focus groups on using the data available on this secure site.

Other

- District council membership rotations are effective October 1 and I am working with those at the present time.
- Ongoing tasks this year include monitoring the implementation of the Staff Development Calendar and the continued collection of all required ESEA documentation.

U.W.-Stout Alumni Association Board of Directors

- As a member of this Board, I attended the fall meeting on September 14, 2013. Focus was given to long range planning for the Alumni Association Board and the Foundation Board regarding fundraising and alumni engagement responsibilities.

Curriculum Feature of the Month

What is an Essential Question? It is an open-ended, thought provoking question that requires higher-order thinking and is used to engage students. It does not have a right or wrong answer and should be written in a way that drives inquiry, exploration, and discussion. If we feel that the content we teach represents answers, then what questions can we raise to get these answers? Our English Language Arts and Mathematics teachers have developed an Essential Question for each unit of instruction. Examples of Essential Questions to use as models: How do the best writers hook and hold their readers? What is the "best fit" line of these "messy" data points? Who is a "winner"? How does (author) use setting to establish a mood?