

NSI celebrates first-year learning in Dallas ISD



On May 16, the Institute for Learning gathered at the Dallas Arboretum with Dallas Independent School District, Pitt's Center for Urban Education, and LRDC researchers to celebrate the progress made thus far on the Networks for School Improvement project. The project, funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, seeks to improve literacy for low-income students. Teams from all 14 participating schools attended, along with principals and executive directors. Many central office staff also attended, including superintendent Michael Hinojosa,



Michael Hinojosa

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mathematics



Content Overlapping Verbal-language Efficacy (COVE), Kenosha, WI – Visit pi.tt/IFLCOVE to learn more.

Join the IFL on September 17, 2019, in Kenosha, WI, for a mathematics workshop designed for early learning educators to explore the ways content understanding overlaps acquisition and development of verbal-language skills and self-efficacy.



NCTM Regional Conference and Exposition, Salt Lake City

IFL mathematics fellows will present at the 2019 NCTM Regional Conference and Exposition, October 16 – 18, 2019, at the Salt Palace Convention Center.

chief academic officer Ivonne Durant, and deputy chief of school leadership Jolee Healy.

After an introduction and welcome from Hinojosa, Maurice



Maurice Swinney

Swinney, chief equity officer of Chicago Public Schools, spoke about using improvement science to drive equity. His inspiring words served as a poignant start to an evening full of inquiry, learning, and growth.

Following Swinney's speech was a panel discussion with six of the school team members who carefully, yet passionately, explained what they accomplished with

their small tests of change. They focused on the learning their students experienced, highlighting how they worked in new ways. In particular, students worked with challenging comprehension questions that asked them to reach across whole texts for big ideas,



Mary Getty, Brad Dominy, Crystal Newman, Christie Graves

they used quick writes as vehicles for writing to learn what is on their minds, and benefitted from student-centered teaching approaches. Diana Nuñez from Adamson High School summarized that team's work on attendance, including the empathy interviews with chronically absent students, and their selection of 25 of those students for mentoring as a test of change before the end of the year. They'll use their results to determine if they'll proceed with mentoring on a larger scale.

Another panel discussion convened to discuss empathy interviews and benefitted from the vulnerability of the tests of change panel. They spoke openly

about coherent messages (or themes) that emerged from their interviews with students and from teaching about their writing successes and frustrations. Students, they said, want to write, and want to write about things



Diana Nuñez

they care about and research, but are frustrated by the drills with nothing but those 26-line essays in preparation for the state tests. Teachers, too, they said, based on their thematic analyses of their empathy interviews, are frustrated by the need for more support to teach "authentic writing" and maintaining students' abilities to pass the state tests.

We are grateful for the executive directors and principals who attended and heard their teachers' voices and the students' voices through the teachers.

We're looking forward to seeing what these NSI teams can do. ■

New online PD offerings coming soon



We are pleased to announce an upcoming new series of online professional development offerings for educators. The IFL's online professional development is flexible and collaborative, offering 8-week workshop experiences. Workshops are rich and interactive with en-

gaging video examples, IFL expert facilitators, and active discussion forums.

Workshop participants will engage in impactful, research-based learning routines. You will see models, get to apply new learning in your own classroom, and receive feedback from peers and your IFL facilitator. After participating in the workshop, you can expect to see and experience observable changes in instruction and student participation.

Content-Focused Coaching in Mathematics® online workshop will be available September 2019.

Visit ifl.pitt.edu to learn more!