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Project Report for Independent Study Project

Introduction:

For my independent study project, I led both large group staff development and individual trainings on the CPS systems in my school. I also helped to set up the purchasing of four systems for our school as well as an elementary school in our feeder area. I worked closely with eInstruction representatives, Douglas County Technology representatives, and my staff. I had become the building expert for clickers and had been anxious to show others in my building how they could be used.

This independent study actually began last October as I went through the process of obtaining a loaner system from eInstruction. I also at that time set up a demonstration with one of the reps for my department, our principal, our BRT and other interested teachers. Throughout the next few months, I had six teachers from different departments observe the clickers and their uses in my classroom. When our staff was surveyed about what technology sessions they would like to see made available to them during our January in-service day, a session on clickers was requested by many staff-second only to training on Power Point. Many people cited the “ease of assessment” as their reason for desiring the training.

In January, I prepared for and led three different hour-long in-service sessions demonstrating the uses and objectives of clickers. After that day, I trained 4 individual teachers in my department on how to set up and use the clickers in their classrooms. I also observed them during their clicker lessons and provided feedback to them over what I saw happening.

This independent study really taught me a lot about collaboration and the careful planning it takes to run a staff development course. It was a rewarding experience (although somewhat nerve-racking as well) to teach other teachers in my building. I’ve

also realized the sort of knowledge that is necessary to become an “expert” on any certain technology; although I have learned so much about the clicker systems, I needed to attend further trainings in order to answer some of their questions and concerns. I became more knowledgeable by attending both a “Clicker II” workshop in Boulder led by Len Scrogan and eInstruction, and a clicker training for our district later on in the spring. I also learned about how to manage resistance to change throughout the development of my independent study. One member of our staff (actually of my department) seemed to be very intent on not spending the money to purchase CPS for our department use. It took quite a bit of effort, emails and using supportive staff from district to convince her otherwise. I’m not certain how much she will use the technology in her classroom, but she did finally concede to the purchase of the system for our department.

Finally, I realize that my staff development with the clickers is going to be an on-going project. In the fall of 2005, I will be working with our librarian Chris Bell to further train our staff on the uses of clickers. I have also created a web site to help our staff get their systems up and running. The site may be viewed at:

<http://ouray.cudenver.edu/~kklyhoc/clickers/index.html>.

ILT Competencies Met:

1. Take a Systems View

I met this competency by understanding why this training was important to our staff, as well as how my role as a building expert played into my responsibility with in my building to lead my staff with the exploration of the CPS technology. I also had to overcome the reluctant department member in order to have my department come to a consensus on the purchasing of the system.

3. Promote collaboration, partnerships and relationships for full inclusion with stakeholders, clients, subject matter, experts, team members, etc.

I met this competency in numerous ways throughout this project. Not only did I work closely with my own department in coordinating the purchase of the clicker system and

individual trainings, but I also worked with a larger cross-section of our staff (38 people attended the in-service sessions I led in January). I worked closely with our principal and technology coordinator to lead the in-service sessions as well. I also fostered relationships at the district level by working with our district technology team. I was able to collaborate during workshops with other teachers who are using the software from all over the Denver Metro Area.

4. Be a lifelong learner and professional

This project really forced me into a leadership role for the first time in my school and helped me to actively participate within my school. It allowed me to contribute to the best practices concerning on-going assessment by introducing and implementing the clickers at ThunderRidge High School. I was also the first to be open to this new technology at my school, and have been experimenting, evaluating and implementing the clickers in order to determine best practice use with them for continued staff development.

5. Conduct a needs assessment for learning or performance interventions

I met this competency by helping our administration and technology coordinator survey the staff on their technology needs for the in-service training. This survey also allowed us to see that the staff was interested in the clickers due to their assessment capabilities.

9. Develop products and resources to support learning and performance.

I met this competency by developing the web site for staff use on clicker basics will help our staff to learn the system via a different media (the web). I also met this competency by understanding how to motivate and foster attitude change in a reluctant staff member.

13. Participate in an implementation process or change strategy.

This competency was met by my development of the in-service materials and the implementation of both the staff training and individual trainings of my department members. I also developed the web site to be used as a training aide once staff has been introduced to the systems.

15. Employing effective strategies (eg. Team leadership, collaboration, and accountability), manage one or more of the following endeavors:

-Personnel, Resources

I met this competency by managing and developing the staff development in-service at my school. I also managed personnel within my building and worked with other technology leaders outside of my building. I led individual trainings of personnel also.

I met this competency concerning resources by coordinating the purchase of the clickers for my school with help from my technology coordinator and Kristin McCord from the district technology office. I also now am managing the training and use of the clicker system within my department.

Design Model Process

Needs Assessment:

I had seen clickers demonstrated during TIE last summer and was very interested in using them as well as implementing them on a larger scale within my school. I saw the immediate cross-content abilities the systems possessed and realized the potential they have to change assessment practices for the better especially when used as assessments for learning.

My principal approached me about the clickers and said that she would like to see more of them and possibly introduce them to our staff on a larger scale. From there, a survey about what technology they would like to be trained on was given to our teachers. Clickers came back as the second topic that generated the most interest. Many of our teachers had heard about the systems and wanted to learn more about how to use them to assess their kids. The only other topic that was more requested was Power Point Training.

Goals and Objectives of Independent Study:

- 1) Acquire a CPS system for trial use and introduction to my staff from eInstruction.
- 2) Learn how to use and operate the CPS software.
- 3) Demonstrate the software and its objectives to the ThunderRidge staff during an in-service training.
- 4) Lead individual training of teachers in my department and observe their use of clickers in their classrooms.
- 5) Attend workshops to further my knowledge about the clicker software capabilities as well as assessment techniques.
- 6) Create a web site that staff will be able to use to help them get started with clicker systems in their own classrooms.

Analysis of Learners:

During the in-service sessions in January, I surveyed my staff about both their knowledge of clickers as well as their uses of assessments in their classrooms without the clickers. Most (72%) had heard about clickers, but only 2% had actually used them. The other 25% of my staff had never seen clickers or used them. In terms of assessment, all of the teachers said that they assess their students on a regular basis. However, when asked how often they assess their students individually during each class period, most teachers responded that they were only able to do this 1-2 times per class (68%), a few (10%) said that they are able to assess their students individually more than twice each class period and 22% said that they were not able to guarantee individual assessment during every class period.

Instructional Plan:

- 1) Get a loaner system from CPS and set up a small demonstration for myself, principal, BRT and a few interested teachers.
- 2) Learn how to use the system and software.
- 3) Train staff during in-service on software, uses and objectives of the systems.
- 4) Attend workshops with other “clicker” teachers to build my knowledge and skills.
- 5) Talk to district reps and other departments to coordinate the purchasing of clicker sets.

- 6) Individually train members of my department on the systems.
- 7) Observe other teacher's clicker lessons and provide feedback for them.
- 8) Develop a web site teachers can use for help in setting up the systems and getting started with using them to assess their students.

Develop and Produce Materials:

For this project, I had to develop various clicker lessons to use both within my own classroom and during the in-service training. I also had to develop and plan an agenda for the in-service. I also created a power point highlighting the objectives and uses to the systems to use during that training. In order to get the staff to really experience the different uses of the systems, I developed the following to use to demonstrate them: 1) a staff survey using the teacher managed mode with the clickers 2) a "there it is" game 3) An assessment for learning done in the teacher managed assessment mode and 4) an example of a formal assessment to be used in the teacher managed mode. I also used these materials while demonstrating the software to our district technology department.

I also developed and used an observation form while observing the members of my department that I had individually trained.

Finally, I developed a "Clicker Help Site" for teachers in my school to use as they begin their initial set-up of the software and clickers in their own classrooms. The site includes information on: Setting up the hardware, setting up the software, inputting your classes into the software, writing student managed and teacher managed assessment and a FAQ section to help trouble shoot common problems.

Data

With respect to the staff in-service sessions, our BRT (building resource teacher) had our staff fill out feedback forms over the sessions they had attended. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being the highest) staff was asked to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of each session they attended. The average score of my evaluations was a 1.5/5 (remember, 1 was the highest score!). The following were comments added to the evaluation: "Great!"

“Wow!” “Super for formal and informal assessments.” “Kiffany should be paid by the company.” “Buy us some of these!” “Worried about the slow student.” “Very fun to see jaded teachers get excited.” (I thought the last comment to be particularly interesting!☺)

I also spoke individually with teachers that I had trained about what improvements they would like to see as well as what questions they still had. I learned they wished to know more about standards use with the systems, how to put symbols into questions (math and science teachers were especially concerned about this), how to ask more in depth questions with the systems and how to use exam view with the software.

The teachers that I individually trained had great feedback for me and were the most helpful in determining what “holes” in my knowledge needed to be filled in-they were also very encouraging and grateful for my time. The whole experience was very rewarding now that I have three other members of my department trained and learning more about the systems. I am really looking forward to next year when I can keep working on getting more of our staff trained on the systems.

Summative Evaluation of the Project

I feel as though I have met the needs of my staff up to this point with respect to clickers. I have also realized that this will be an on-going project that continues on into the following school year. Since our librarian, Chris Bell, will be working with me to help train staff in the fall, I am really looking forward to collaborating with Chris to lead the training.

As for the project as a whole, I believe that I met all of the objectives that I had set forward for my self. I was able to acquire and learn how to use the clickers. I demonstrated the uses and objectives to my staff during our building wide in-service in January. I also led individual trainings with three teachers from my department and helped them through their first and second clicker lessons. I was also able to attend two different workshops to help me further expand my knowledge and uses of the software. The web site that I created as a help site to staff that have had initial training will be of

further help in the fall. I have also referred my staff to the site for those who are interested in setting up their software and authoring assessments during the summer.

When I initially started this project I had not expected it to be so difficult and time consuming. Staff development and training requires much more time and preparation than I had previously realized. However, I was pleasantly surprised at how much fun I had teaching my peers. It was a very rewarding experience and I learned so much from them as well. Although it was a lot of work, it was so wonderful to see those teachers that I had trained using the clickers effectively in their classrooms and in turn affecting students in a positive manner at my school. I look forward to the next school year when I can further use what I have learn and continue to be a leader in with the clicker technology in my school.