Best Practices: Quotes from Experts in the Field

A Thinking Curriculum

- When possible, research activities should support implementation of the thematic units designed for Paterson teachers. With the development of these units, the District has adopted the IFL Principles of Learning to improve the quality of instruction and opportunities for learning that they offer to students. To ensure academic rigor the IFL calls for "curriculum organized around major concepts that students are expected to know deeply" with implementation committed to "a knowledge core, high thinking demand, and active use of knowledge" (Principles of Learning, 2013)

- 21st century learning skills "drive the construction of deep understanding. If separated and taught in isolation, the result will be the same as pushing on the clutch of an automobile. If the clutch is disengaged, the auto goes nowhere. One can argue and find supportive research that content knowledge will never reach excellence without engaging process skills. Thus, reading skills, information skills, media literacy, critical thinking, and creative thinking are inseparably connected to content mastery and invention of new knowledge." (Loertscher, 2010)

- Synthesizing information rather than just finding, evaluating, and analyzing it is key learning skill for the twenty-first century. It is the wise school librarian who understands that learning is grounded in information use, and who makes that grounding evident to his or her students and colleagues and to those who make decisions about our schools.(Neuman, 2012)

Student Centered Learning

- "Teachers must be colearners with kids, expert at asking great, open-ended questions and modeling the learning process required to answer those questions. Teachers should be master learners in the classroom." (Richardson, 2013)

- Let's think about authentic work products. To communicate in the "real world," professionals use letters, brocbures. bookmarks, DVDs, broadcasts, position papers, press releases, letters to the editor, posters. Web 2.0 products, pro/con lists, articles, newsletters, postcards, scrapbooks, and more. Most of these products don't use the formal language found in research articles, books, or reference materials. That means that students must reword, rethink, and adapt the research language into practical and authentic language. That minimizes plagiarism. (Fontichiaro, 2009)

- "Learning in today's information-rich environments requires our learners to have far more complex and sophisticated skills than pointing and clicking or copying and gathering: It requires them to be information experts who can extract meaning from a variety of presentation formats and who can create those formats themselves." (Neuman, 2012)

Collaboration

- "School librarians are uniquely qualified to work with classroom teachers to facilitate student learning and achievement. When the school librarian works with fellow educators to plan, teach, and assess curriculum-based instruction, students will become more "effective users of ideas and information" (Gavigan, 2012)

- Collaboration between the librarian and teacher has an added benefit for teachers who are implementing the Common Core--he or she is not longer working alone. "This shared responsibility brings more help to the children; there are two professionals working with them, each with unique talents and skills." (Rowe, 2007)

- "A school librarian who goes into the library and shuts the door is going to be in the same boat as the isolated teachers. Students need learning that connects and builds on their prior knowledge in many content areas and contexts. The entire school building should be full of collaborative conversations among teachers -- including school librarians -- about what they are doing and how they can help one another help students build on their prior knowledge and connect to new ideas and information." (Harvey, 2012)

Technology

- Jessica Park, a teacher in a podcast project, states "I like using media for presenting information beyond a research paper because I feel that the students get more invested in the project and it seems like there is a real product that comes out of their work. Papers are solely academic, but using the podcast and having them think about organization and presentation to an audience beyond their teachers is a skill they can apply to the real world." (Oremland, 2013)

- "Let's create authentic audiences for our students, so they are accountable to others for honest work. Publishing on a blog or wiki, creating a paper in the collaborative Google Docs and taking advantage of its free Web hosting of finished products, or creating a videocast or podcast are all inexpensive ways for students' work to be made public." (Fontichiaro, 2009)

- "What's new about learning in the twenty-first century is that various dimensions of information have changed -- expanding in every conceivable way. Information is now a "24-7" phenomenon: It comes from everywhere, at every time, at every level of quality, and in every format imaginable. It bombards us. It requires us to sort through it to find what is credible, to evaluate it for accuracy and coherence, and to establish its validity." (Neuman, 2012)

- "Alternatives to the printed book are likely to lead to more and more reading on line. It will be the kids and teens who decide what media they prefer. It will be our job to provide access to what they want and need on whatever devices they prefer and certainly wherever and whenever they care to access what we have to offer" (Loertscher, 2010)

Assessment

- **"Collect and share exemplary student work** that demonstrates mastery of college and career ready knowledge and skills. Use these examples to improve professional understanding among educators of "how to identify 21st century knowledge and skills" in student work." (Manger, et. al., 2011)