

NEA Foundation Supports Teacher Leadership System

The Cedar Rapids Community School District applied for and received a two-year grant with the National Education Association (NEA) Foundation Institute for Innovation in Teaching and Learning in November, 2014. The goal of the application is to create an evaluation system for our Teacher Leadership System (TLS) which will provide reliable feedback and data which will be used to make on-going improvements to the TLS in the CRCSD.

The NEA Foundation Institute for Innovation in Teaching and Learning is a structured capacity-building experience that supports local unions and school District administrative leaders' engaged in collaborative efforts to improve education. Cedar Rapids is one of sixteen school districts in the US that are engaged in this collaborative work. Supports provided by NEA include, but are not limited to:

1. Coaching and technical support for Team Action Plan – Barbara Clementi, NEA Director for Colorado, provides ongoing and onsite technical assistance and coaching on plan design, implementation, progress monitoring, leadership, and organizational development of the plan.
2. Opportunities for Networking – a team of District teachers, administrators, and a school board member have attended the NEA Foundation Cross-Site Convening in Washington DC for the past two years. The purpose of the convening is to enhance learning among the cohort, improve action planning, and focus on teaching and learning issues.

Speakers and topics at this year's convening included:

- Pasi Sahlberg – Collaboration, Teacher Voice and Equity in Reforming Education: Lessons from the Finnish Experience
- Deborah Loewenberg-Ball and Paul Reville – All Teachers are Effective
- Anthony Bryk – *Getting Better at Getting Better*
- Ta-Nehisi Coates – Race in America

During the 2014-2015 school year, the team served in an advisory role as evaluation tools were developed and administered for the Teacher Leadership System. Components of the evaluation system included:

- Teacher and Administrator Survey - An extensive process for survey administration and review of results was created and implemented.
- Teacher Leader Continuum of Development (COD) - Creation, administration, and analysis of the continuum of development was completed.
- Forced Choice Activity – District administration and the Teacher Leadership Advisory Team completed and analyzed results to inform decision-making.

Goals for the 2015-2016 school year include:

- Create a plan for the infusion of focus questions from TL Survey with focus groups as an evaluation tool
- Review the existing evaluation tools and refine the processes that are currently used for evaluation of the TLS
- Include student achievement data as a part of the evaluation process
- Create a process for, analyze and include teacher retention data as part of the evaluation



NEA Convening Team Members engaged in site-based team time following a presentation by Anthony Bryk, author of "Getting Better at Getting Better"



2015 NEA Convening Team Members: Front: Ray Feuss, Melissa Courtney, Stephen Probert, Tania Johnson, Kim Miller, Mary Ellen Maske, John Laverty, Val Dolezal, and Dr. Brad Buck.