



2011 STATE RECOGNITION AWARDS

TEAM AWARD #2

For influencing the instructional leadership and professional growth of educators

Learning Walk Program

Fort Vancouver High School
Jeff Snell, Principal, Vancouver Public Schools

In order to close the achievement gap at a high poverty, highly mobile school, best practice instruction is critical. Teachers at Fort Vancouver High School have developed the Learning Walk Program, a process for collaboration that focuses on recognizing best practices in their classrooms.

The process, which takes place four times each year, involves building wide learning walks following instructional meetings used to develop a rubric for collecting data regarding specific instructional focus areas. On building walk days, teams of teachers use their preparation time to visit classrooms and collect data using the rubric. After the visits, teachers meet in a conference room, post the observation data on the white board, reflect on the raw data, and begin a high level professional dialogue session using “I noticed” and “I wonder” language. During this reflection time, the educators respond to the data and draw conclusions regarding the school’s progress toward building-wide instructional goals, taking the time to develop ideas for the schools’ next steps with professional development. The data is then reported out through an instructional newsletter with next steps for professional development. During the 2010-11 school year the focus of the Learning Walk Program was on learning targets,

In addition to members of the building staff, outside guests have also been involved in the process, helping collect data and encourage more reflection. The visitors represent central office, elementary, secondary, and higher education representatives from both inside and outside the district.

According to Kathy Everidge, Chief of Secondary Schools for Vancouver Public Schools, the Building Wide Learning Walks are transforming instruction and improving learning for the students at Fort Vancouver High School, enabling students to be life, career and college ready.