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Formative Assessments and Literacy

One of the major goals of our grant is to build capacity on the part of the staff to improve instructional practice with a focus in formative assessment and literacy. We have done this by building “learning teams”, many cross campus, who focus on a strategy in their classrooms and meet regularly to compare student work and effectiveness of the strategy to inform future practice. We began this process with a group of teachers last year around literacy instruction and have expanded to formative assessment this year. Both our formative assessment and our literacy strategies provide a mechanism for teachers to better understand and meet the needs (academic and social) of each of the individual students in their classes.

School Demographics (%)							provided by Pleasant Valley HS, 2007
African American	White	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Other Ethnicity	Free & Reduced Lunch	Total # of students
2.4	79.9	5.7	9.8	.9	1.4	20.7	1,945

Professional Development to move teaching and learning forward

- Our assessment professional learning team (teachers from both sites, who meet every 3-4 weeks after school for extended discussion on a book in common) has read extensively in the areas of formative assessment, including the works of Rick Stiggins, Dylan William, Shirley Clark and others.
- Approximately 30 staff from both sites have attended Stiggins’ Assessment Training Institute (ATI)
 - Currently we have 48 teachers from both sites participating in a pilot (called Keeping Learning on Track, or KLT) developed by William Dylan, author of “Inside the Black Box. This pilot helps teachers learn and implement day-by-day, minute-by-minute assessment strategies in the classroom. Dylan William will also be working with our KLT participants and all interested CUSD personnel as part of a one-day visit to Chico on March 14.
 - Kate Kinsella, literacy expert, has worked with members of both high school staffs.
 - Approximately 60 teachers from both campuses attended one of two two-day workshops on implementing literacy strategies with Julie Adams. Follow-up meetings during the year allow teachers to discuss the strategies they are using and share ideas for deeper implementation.