

The Overseas Teacher

education for democracy / democracy in education

February 2010

Volume 45 Number 2

OFT SUPPORTS cOntinuous sCHOOL IMPROVEMENT....small c, small s, small i!!

Marie Sainz-Funaro, President OFT

Over the past few years, OFT has made several efforts to address the concerns of teachers with CSI and AdvancEd. We have had joint training with administrators, LURs, and CSI chairs several times; we have surveyed teachers to find out what the issues are with CSI and AdvancEd. We have shared these concerns with management. Now it is time to ratchet this up another step because problems persist, and school improvement is too important to ignore.

The concerns of teachers, who are the direct providers of services, must be heard. At the risk of being redundant, but to make sure that everyone understands OFT's position on improving schools, OFT has proven that it vigorously supports continuing school improvement; however, we have found that CSI and AdvancEd as currently being implemented in our schools raises many questions that must be addressed. First, do we have data that shows a correlation between CSI and AdvancEd and an increase in scores? If so, where is that data? OK, maybe that's hard to prove, so then let's ask the teachers and CSI chairs who spend countless hours trying to meet



Dr. Marie Sainz-Funaro

the demands of AdvancEd the following questions. Is there any connection between the teaching and learning that takes place in your classroom and what you are doing with CSI and AdvancEd? What do you believe you need to help your students achieve? Let's ask each and every teacher and CSI chair whether or not the amount of time and the activities devoted to CSI and AdvancEd in their schools are worth it, especially during the year of the "visit." If not, why not?

CSI chairs and our faculty are doing a remarkable job of meeting the challenges of CSI and AdvancEd. They are dedicated educators and know that being "accredited" is important. They believe that school improvement is essential but, with very few exceptions, there is a frustration in our schools that cannot be ignored. Much time is spent in meetings that have no impact on teaching and learning; much time is spent doing paperwork that is not relevant to teaching and learning; much time is

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OFT/DoDDS-E Joint Training October 22, 2009

Marie and Linda Demonstrate UDDI

Pam Cleaverley, LUR, Rota HS

Dr. Nancy Bresell, DoDDS-E Director, opened the training on a positive note by welcoming the opportunity for open dialog. Dr. Walker continued this theme by comparing the relationship between management and OFT to a marriage, which has its good days and bad days, but in which there is an attempt to work out problems on a daily basis. She reiterated that the school leadership team consists of administrator,



Cheryl Teare, AFT presenter

LUR, and CSI Chair and that if the adults in the school are fighting, the children suffer. She praised Marie for her part in making possible this joint training, the only one of its kind in Europe.

Marie introduced her copresenter Linda Hogan and Cheryl Teare, director of the AFT Institute for Leadership, who conducted the morning's first workshop on Diversity. Ms. Teare invited participants to explore the similarities and differences we carry, in other words, our diversity, and to discover our own mode of dealing with conflict. Using an Iceberg chart, she revealed the way we react to people on a first meeting – the tip of the

iceberg. First judgments are made on physical characteristic, such as gender, race, and age, but as we go deeper into the iceberg, we really get to know the person – their work background, sexual orientation, and experience in DoDDS. Ms. Teare then linked the iceberg theory to Thomas Kilmann's Conflict Mode Instrument and the Ladder of Inference, which illustrates the danger of seeing the world only through our own assumptions and beliefs. She encouraged listeners to take the time to understand each other's story, not to jump to conclusions, but to try to see through the lens of others.

After Jeanne Sarch's presentation on the Statute, the fun began as Marie and Linda used UDDI to review the Contract. Using a knowledge survey and self-evaluation instrument, they formed ability groups of administrators and reps. This highlighted a possible problem with self-evaluation, as some participants exaggerated their knowledge. However, the groups worked well together and welcomed a new



Marie and Linda present UDDI

way of reviewing the Contract. Participants were then reorganized into mixed ability groups and asked to address specific problems that might arise in a school. All felt that this practical application of what had been reviewed was helpful and that the afternoon was a great success, not only in familiarizing LURs and principals with the CBA, but also as a living example of UDDI.



OFT representatives meet with Dr. Nancy Bresell, DoDDS-E Director

OFT/DoDDS-E Training Week Memories



Pam Cleaverley, Vera Morgan, and Eileen Kless



Marie and Steve Schrankel



Paul Dellacroce, Area Superintendent for CIA and Marie



Margie Lally and Craig Lord



Team Rota: Beth Peris, Pam Cleaverley, Ken Harvey, Maribel Bastidas, and Joan Manning



Mary Miller, Vera Morgan, Toni Boscacci, and Bernie Camuso



Terry Douglas, Serra Coruh, Rosie Uluer and Kathleen Reiss, Ankara Principals



Dr. Carmen Arroyo, Asst. Superintendent, and Marie



Barbara Ferg-Carter and Rota Principal Doug McEnergy

Linda Hogan's Visit to Vicenza October 6, 2009



Vicenza teachers celebrate with a dinner on the town.



ES OFT members Maria Albin, Christine Wagner, Sita (Marcia) Scheppele, Mary Miller, Elizabeth McLean with Linda Hogan



Elizabeth Mclean, Maria Albin, Toni Boscacci

GIFT Masters Programs: Summer, 2010

Marr Shan Cagle, GIFT Director

Is it time to begin work on your Masters Degree? Starting in the summer of 2010, GIFT will offer three Framingham State College Masters Degree programs for twelve weeks in two summers. For more information contact any of the POCs listed below or GIFT Director Marr Shan Cagle at marr.cagle@eu.dodea.edu.

- Naples - Master of Arts Concentration in Educational Leadership (10 courses) POC - Kathryn Osborne - kathryn.osborne@eu.dodea.edu
- Naples - Master of Education Concentration in Special Education (12 courses) POC - Mandy Giddens - mandy.giddens@eu.dodea.edu
- Naples - Graduate Certificate Program in Special Needs (4 courses) POC - Mandy Giddens - mandy.giddens@eu.dodea.edu
- Sigonella - Master of Education Concentration in International Teaching (9 courses) POC - Tara Seetai - tara.seetai@eu.dodea.edu

JROTC Veterans' Day Ceremony

Major George Smailes, OFT Member, Vicenza HS

Again this year the cadets of the 10th JROTC Battalion, Vicenza High School's Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) participated in the annual Veterans' Day ceremony at the Florence American Military Cemetery on November 11th. This year Army cadets were joined by mem-

bers of the Navy JROTC program at Naples High School.

The cadet chain of command from each school planned, coordinated and commanded the entire ceremony. Eighteen Army and ten Navy cadets participated in the event. A joint Color Guard served as the centerpiece for this event.



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spent getting "approval" to do professional development in schools. Every minute of a teacher's time should be devoted to teaching and learning in the classroom and improving their skills. Research is abundant and shows that ongoing, job-embedded, relevant professional development at the school site with time for collaboration is what really works.

Teachers must be given opportunities and time to examine the data that drives instruction and be provided strategies on how to differentiate in meaningful ways. That does not necessarily mean creating the data. That should be work done by someone else above the school level to help our teachers meet their challenge in the classroom. Is there anyone who

doubts that the classroom is where the most important work is being done? Schools should receive above school level support and be provided with appropriate local assessments, analysis of appropriate data, time to collaborate, resources as needed and ongoing relevant professional development in using data to drive instruction. Above school personnel should support and not cause unnecessary delays with "approving" what teachers and principals know they need. AdvancEd is an accrediting agency, yet most of our time is devoted to "meeting the demands of AdvancEd" which may or may not be time well spent working with our students. There is only one AdvancEd goal that has a direct impact on our students: Teaching

and Learning. The majority of our resources must support what happens in the classroom. Yes, we want to show the world that we are "accredited" but something has gone astray when you look at what is happening in our schools and where time and energy is being spent. Too much time is devoted to the "process" with lots of irrelevant paperwork. With few exceptions, there is frustration in our schools which cannot be ignored. There is a serious disconnect between continuing school improvement, small c, small s, small i, and CSI and AdvancEd. I ask our leaders to help our teachers help our students by taking a serious look at this. That's the challenge.

OFT Members Serve in Task Groups

David Wass, OFT Member, Rota HS



Debra Wilson



Gariann Wrenchey



Nancy Hacker



*Linda,
Marie,
and
Valerie
Suttmiller*

OFT was well-represented at the Task Group meeting in Massachusetts last December. Four new task groups were added this year to the groups already established: 21st Century Skills; Early Childhood Education; Middle School Review; and Scheduling/Staffing. The next Task Group meeting will be held in Tampa, Florida, February 22-26.



Serra Coruh



*David Wass, Eileen Kless,
Marie Sainz-Funaro, Virginia Parkinson,
and Oscar Baldemor*



*Joan Manning, Chris Tutty, David Wass,
and Virginia Parkinson*

NHS and DGF Support Haiti Earthquake Relief

Pam Cleaverley, LUR, Rota HS

The morning of January 21 was cold and miserable, but there was plenty of warmth in the DGF courtyard, where the DGF Chapter of the National Honor Society was selling hot chocolate and baked goods to raise money for Haiti earthquake relief. In the fifteen minutes before school and thirty minutes at lunchtime, they collected \$1,600 – an amazing sum for such a small school. With the addition of another

\$100 from a teacher, this made possible a donation of \$1,700 to Save the Children.

Katherine Moore, NHS president, Pam Cleaverley, NHS sponsor, and the members wish to express their sincere thanks to the students and faculty of both the middle/high school and the elementary school for their incredible generosity.



*Rota HS LUR, Pam Cleaverley,
and NHS members*

Vicenza Elementary Makes Pasta!

Linda Testa, OFT Member, Vicenza Elementary School

Nonna Agata visits Signora Testa's (immersion) and Signora Kight's third grade immersion classes to demonstrate "how to" make pasta. Third grade students have been reading and discussing Siggy's Spaghetti Works in their Literacy Place textbooks.

Third grade students at Vicenza Elementary School have been working hard on improving

writing skills. Graphic organizers have been a great strategy used to improve their writing. After reading these stories, follow-up activities related to DoDEA standards help students to develop their "how to" writing skills.

If you want to know how to make pasta, ask a third grader at Vicenza Elementary School!



Linda Testa and Nonna Agata display the fresh dough



Rota OFT Member, Josh Garrison, Serves in Iraq

David Wass, Rota OFT Member

OFT Rota organized a warm send-off for OFT member Josh Garrison, DGF HS Computer teacher, who reported for a 5-month tour of duty in the Air Force reserves on October 21, 2009.

Teachers from both the DGF Elementary and High School have collected baked goods, candy, paperback books and magazines, as well as over 70 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies to let Josh and his team know that we are thinking of them. Josh will return to DGF HS in March.



Josh Garrison and the 332nd Expeditionary Communications Squadron in Iraq with their Girl Scout Cookies



OFT member, Josh Garrison Christmas in Iraq, 2009

Rota HS Group Wins Journalism Prize

Maribel Bastidas, OFT Member, Rota HS

On Friday, February 5th, a team of four students from D.G.F. received an award at a ceremony at the Palacio Garvey in Jerez for winning the best news story category of the journalism competition La Voz Escolar. A panel of professionals selected the winning article from more than 1500 submitted by all the participant schools. The award, presented by the Education

Delegate of the Province of Cadiz, Blanca Alcántara, and the general director of La Voz, Antonio González, consisted of a digital camera for each member of the team and the team sponsor. The team, composed of four students from upper-level Spanish classes at DGF, was sponsored by OFT member Maribel Bastidas, Spanish teacher.



OFT member Maribel Bastidas with her award-winning students

Cranberry Bread for Thanksgiving in Vicenza

Pam Cleaverley, LUR, Rota HS

You can't keep Linda Testa and her students out of the kitchen! Since many parents were deploying, Linda thought it would be a good idea to send each child home with their own loaf of fresh-baked cranberry bread. After reading the story *A Cranberry Thanksgiving*, the children used their reading skills in a cooperative baking lesson, which built on vocabulary development and following directions. Since Vicenza's CSI goal is writing, the children completed the activity by writing a paragraph on how to bake delicious cranberry bread.



Future Educator Association State Officers plan European Conference

Lori Izzo, OFT Member and FEA Sponsor, Aviano MHS

From October 20 – 22, 2009, four student officers along with their Future Educator Association advisors met in Wiesbaden, Germany, to plan this spring's annual FEA-Europe Conference, which will be held in Garmisch, Germany, February 2-5, 2010. The theme of this year's conference will be "Illuminate the heart and mind. TEACH!" Attendees will have the opportunity to explore the varied careers in education by attending both large and small group sessions run by stateside and DoDEA-Europe presenters. In addition, various competitions are offered, which parallel the FEA National Conference in the United States. FEA European State Officers are given the opportunity to provide input on the presentations and competitions offered as well as to actively participate in the running of the conference. Every year FEA students come away from the conference inspired and excited about the teaching profession.



FEA State Historian, Bridie Condon from Naples MHS and FEA State Secretary, Patrick Plaza of Aviano MHS

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The Overseas Teacher

The Overseas Teacher is published four times a year by the Overseas Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

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Is anyone retiring in your school this year? Do you have any special news to share? Do you have an opinion on an educational issue? Let us know what is happening in your school. Please send articles and clearly-labeled photos to Pamela.Cleaverley@eu.dodea.edu.

Change of address form. Please cut out and send with new address to: Pam Cleaverley, PSC 819, Box 63, FPO AE 09645