SMS STEM Partnership Notes: September 10, 2012

We had a good discussion at our last meeting about what it means to become a partner school district – what schools need and want from the partnership and what they can contribute.

A quick summary of comments is bulleted below.

Schools want to:

* Bring project-based science and math (like FIRST) into the classroom
* Be part of a network that is using common practices (“this is the way we are going to deliver it”)
* Be part of a community that promotes STEM education
* Share best practices/ be a learning community
* Have a robust math/science/technology curriculum at every level during the school day
* Pick or school or two within the district to participate as prototypes – based on where improvement or innovation is needed in each district
* Engage all children in rigorous math and science
* Teach teams of teachers within districts and with other districts
* Study high-leverage strategies
* Focus on in-school change
* Engage in staff development and bringing more purpose into the curriculum
* Recognize that “ teaching practice change and transformation is more than a workshop”
* Use tools and resources to integrate into curriculum
* Utilize CTE teachers to impact math and science teaching
* Have a more formal integrated approach in schools
* Align technical math with common core standards
* Have access to network’s technical content
* Create and provide “STEM experiences” for teachers
* Have access to mentors, collaboration with other schools, STEM activities

Meeting notes are attached to this email.

Homework for all partners:  Please send a draft of your organization’s role in the partnership (fill in your block of the MOU) to Lita Colligan by October 15th, along with the name of the leader in your organization who would sign the agreement.  The sooner we understand what schools need and what they can contribute, the sooner we can have a substantive discussion about how to form a STEM learning community network, as described above.

Deb and I met with Salem-Keizer today.  They are going to work on the next version of the agreement, including a school district partner role, so we will have a model.

They also plan to contribute some other revisions to the draft MOU.

I will send out the most updated version sometime in early October, and that may help each of your organizations as your formulate your needs and contributions as partners.

Deb is working on a matrix that may also help each partner clarify their needs, contributions, and gaps in resources.

More info to follow:  new version of MOU, matrix of needs and contributions, and other updates.

Please see meeting notes for other next steps.

Please call me or send questions if you need more clarification.

We are building the plane while flying it… so thanks for your ongoing commitment to this work, despite the ambiguity.

Lita