

Whatcom County Math Project (WCMP) is a three year grant supported by the Transition Math Project (TMP), a statewide collaborative mathematics initiative of K-12 schools, community and technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions. Funding for TMP comes from the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Transition Math Project supports mutual partnerships among high schools and post-secondary institutions as they work to improve student outcomes in mathematics. To help students successfully progress from high school math to college-level math, TMP identified the math skills and knowledge high school graduates need to meet minimum admission requirements, avoid remediation upon enrolling in college, and complete college-level work. These skills and their outcomes are defined in the College Readiness Mathematics Standards.

The standards include process strands (1-3) that promote comprehensive understanding and communication of mathematical content. The standards also outline competency-based strands (4-8) detailing skills that students need to know in order to successfully transition to entry-level college mathematics coursework.

Currently, work is underway to implement those standards through outreach materials, curricula, teaching strategies, and professional development. WCMP has focused on clear college readiness expectations in math and the need for closer collaboration among high school math teachers and college math faculty by creating Lesson Writing Workshops.

Workshop participants were recruited from each of the partner schools in Whatcom County. Four workshops took place during the 2007-2008 school year. Each workshop focused on a different component of the lesson writing process. As a first step, writers were asked to specifically target one content strand and two process strands in the College Readiness Standards

Peer groups were formed to provide support throughout the process. Writers wrote new lessons with their targets in mind, or refined a past lesson to align it with the standards. Included with each lesson are teacher resources, student work masters as well as both pre and post assessment components. Each lesson passed through at least two peer review sessions during and outside of the workshop sessions.

Because the lessons were written to be implemented by a wider audience, an independent reviewer analyzed each lesson and provided feedback on standard matching, consistency, and practical usability of the lesson. The workshops also provided assessment methodology and targeting background. As each lesson passed through review its related assessment components also received feedback by the assessment specialist.

Throughout the compilation, lessons are organized by content strand number so that teachers can access them as needed in the context of the class they are teaching. Because of this, the lesson numbering begins at Content Strand 4 and runs through Content Strand 8. The Process Strands (1-3) are referenced within the body of each lesson.

Finally, a video, created by WCMP in conjunction with the Berc Research Group, shows implementation of one of the workshop lessons. The lesson was taught by a first year teacher from outside the project. The video includes a pre-teaching interview of the lesson author and the teacher, the classroom experience and finally a post teaching interview focusing on lesson implementation, accuracy of lesson targets, and outcomes of the lesson.

Workshop participants expressed broad support and continuation of the project. The Whatcom County Math Project appreciates the professionalism, creativity and work ethic the lesson

authors exhibited throughout the experience. As a component of the ongoing goal of connecting teachers across the county, the WCMP plans to refine and continue the Lesson Writing Workshop model in the future.

Participants:

Bellingham High School

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Heidi Stahlberg

Blaine High School

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