

## DCNTP Board Meeting Agenda October 28, 2014

Attendance: Roberta Felker, Tom Howe, Heather Lott, Tim Mommaerts, Shirley Smith, Barb Sramek, Nicole Toepfer, Teresa Voss

**Our Mission:** Because research and practice indicate that good teaching is central to student learning, the Dane County New Teacher Project will provide educators the systematic, on-going training and support necessary to build induction and mentoring programs. This process ensures a profession strengthened by educators who continually refine their practice through collaboration and reflection.

**Today's Outcomes:** Together, we will:

1. **consider** how *group smarts* help to create a learning organization.
2. **identify** DCNTP artifacts to share with a national audience.
3. **update** recent DCNTP news and **share** insights.
4. **consider** the role of the courageous follower in a learning organization.

### **4:00-4:45 Connecting: Group Smarts in a Learning Organization**

*Purpose: To consider how "group smarts" intersect with our notions of a learning organization.*

- Introductions, [Board roles](#), and welcoming our newest member, Teresa Voss.
- Read the introduction and your assigned section of [Group Smarts](#). Prepare, with your partner:
  - Your key insight or learning related to a learning organization ([use page 1 Tool Kit](#)):

Tom and Tim, section "Some groups are smarter than others."

It has nothing to do with group member motivation, satisfaction; it's everything to do with difference. Be willing to listen to other points of view.

This relates to two first Induction Program Standards (IPS). Laying groundwork organizationally and commitment-wise so progress can be made.

How does it relate to mission? Continually refine practice through regular communication, feedback from a variety of groups.

Example: with the focus group we heard back from beginning teachers (BTs), facilitated by someone not involved with DCNTP. Example of groups of persons to learn from that communication.

Heather and Nicole, section "How do you raise the group's IQ?"

It's not about putting together individually smart people, but about the way the group communicates. In a highly functioning group people feel safe to communicate, structures are in place for this.

Women are better at this than men.

Especially useful to consider for DCNTP board:

Carefully consider info from one another as potentially useful. How to balance for equal input, dialog to be heard.

It is essential to allow constructive critiques; never about, or judging, an individual. There's freedom to think because you're judgment-free. That is aligned with a supportive learning environment.

High level management support and the status of whoever's in charge and formal reflection are not essential. What is essential: people are told you are here because what you have to offer matters, and you have the ability to operate in a group.

As the DCNTP board, we represent our role, not just our district. Leadership that reinforces learning is something we align to.

In IPS, we relate to first two. Also mentor professional development and learning communities have an impact.

How this relates to our movement forward? Time for group development to learn who we are, pay attention to building safety—this is not just fluffy stuff. Conversation is not just for fun, but for purpose.

Barb and Roberta, section “Selecting a smart team.”

Diversity (socio-economic, racial, age) is key to intentionally selecting smart team.

Building blocks of a supportive learning environment: recognize value of opposing view. Willingness to entertain all points of view is connected to safety...that's the whole point.

Thinking about IPS, mentor role and responsibilities and learning communities connect. How we choose mentors, being intentional in thinking about what we do. Mentee may have very different perspective. We've had talented teachers leave because they say they don't fit in...talented people, a loss to us.

Group think can happen, like with teacher teams, bringing people into an organization, pressure to have someone “like us” because will make a good team. But other backgrounds will challenge us.

- How this learning relates to DCNTP's movement forward, noting mission above and IPS:

- Share and chart.

How do different people generate solutions? Maybe open up to a new world view.

Page 5: communication is really essential. Relationship, relationship, relationship...still based on communication.

Heather: use of protocol. They do actively teach communication skills.

Roberta: Creates space, a sense of where you're going, doing the right thing. Confidence of mentor translate to mentee.

Nicole: open ended ness of protocol validates whatever BT brings to the table.

- NORMS: [Seven Norms of Collaboration](#) and [Rating the Consistency of Group Member Behavior](#) from [Thinking Collaborative](#). Norms tool from [Learning Forward](#).

Review: DCNTP is a learning organization, so our board meetings are a learning opportunity. Last year's theme was leadership. This year: what's a learning

organization. Always back to IPS, DCNTP work, but also thinking about all the work we do—back in home district, and other.

Norms of collaboration from Garmston, referenced in our previous work tonight.

Learning forward provides a tool: creating norms, based on what the group is trying to accomplish. Maybe DCNTP board can use this in the future.

Adaptive schools presents norms of collaboration different than rules. Highest functioning group exhibits these as habits. They've become normative. Interesting difference; not hard and fast rules, but habits and skills that people develop

Garmstan talks about it the way we might talk about our classroom rules.

Heather: New teacher center based on these collaborative norms.

Roberta: What would people think our norms are if they came in and observed?

Tim: Ever tape a group and have them watch themselves?

Norms scale—rating the consistency of group member behavior—see handout. Seven statements. They all start with we, not I.

New Teacher Center has protocols for mentor forums.

#### **4:45-5:15 Action Items:**

*Purpose: To act on specific issues related to the mission of DCNTP.*

- **Symposium:** Each scholarship costs DCNTP roughly \$1950. (Registration: \$650, four nights hotel \$700, airfare \$650.) One scholarship registration already paid for. In kind investment: district agrees to pay for substitute; participant pays luggage fee, meals en route, travel and parking costs to and from airport, agrees to present at District Council. Input on Symposium's value; brochure and website

Heather: Super valuable. For a person like me where that's really my whole job, nothing else is so relevant. Three others went: special ed, EE, ESL, all found it very useful in helping to inform the direction program is now able to go in. Made it not just Heather's voice supporting this. Helped to share knowledge.

Roberta: value of talking to people who have the same interests, same job.

○ Questions to consider:

- Pre-Conference required, or suggested?

Yes, go to pre-conference

- Number of scholarships?

Two

- Shirley's attendance?

Yes, valuable in language for communication with districts

- Board attendance and final approval?

But kind of odd for the board to vote for themselves to go. Feedback?

Teresa: perspective of reminding us we represent the role. A good foundation for building and sharing out our work. Tim: two times I've gone has benefited more as board member than principal role.

This is an important way to build the leadership cadre.

Tom: we'll put that forward to superintendents. SS and I figure out the money. Look at your calendars, see what you think.

Heather: a nice gift to give districts; in trade for being on board can give back to district. It's so helpful.

- NTIN: Sharing Artifacts of Effective Program Practice in Chicago, November 18-20, using IPS:

Developing Mentors and Mentor Leaders	Program Assessment and Evaluation	Communication and Advocacy

In November going to NTIN, where 25 programs that work with NTC come together to share ideas. Share artifacts of practice, so there are 25 artifacts.

On agenda: developing mentors and mentor leaders, program assessment and evaluation (will continue to work on that goal), communication and advocacy.

Communication is a new goal. Timely with article selected today. Also SS added communication facets.

Andrew, Aloy, Tom continue to work on program evaluation. But from board perspective, are there any artifacts we should share?

- **Recommendations for NTIN sharing:**

RM forum agenda, Principal breakfast tool authored by Tim and Tom.

Teresa: Having mentor refresher during BT seminar. Fostering continued mentor growth. BT and mentor split off. Also advocacy, fact that you're willing to meet with each district—the in-district consult. Those are all very different from each other.

Tim: Your contacts within DPI.

Roberta: The final budget presentation, how it looked to superintendents. Ended up being informative and useful document.

Heather: Photo essays—a good communication tool.

Teresa: Program assessment at a smaller scale. Looked at feedback from last year's group. How to structure (1st aid in 1st month). (communication, program assessment)

Heather: any number of program feedbacks—related to developing mentors.

**5:15-5:40 Learning: DCNTP updates (referencing IPS)**

*Purpose: To learn about DCNTP's current standing and address areas of concern.*

- [Sept. 29 District Council](#) attended by 11/16 districts, largely by “singletons” who were mostly program leaders. *Open discussion continuing from last time:* How to encourage paired participation? Learning topics for Dec. 8—what are you hearing from BT's, mentors and principals?

Items appropriate for District Council (DC)? DC is formal learning, not decision making.

Teresa: focus is Educator Effectiveness (EE). How to help new teachers use data. How do you look at it, subset of kids, how do teachers coach? No one knows how to coach in that part.

Mentees are asking mentors lots of questions. It cycles through: I don't know how to help my new staff member.

Tom: Juliet needed help with EE. I thought, I don't do this, but I guess I do this.

We've played around with EE and how it intersects with mentoring.

Roberta: Step 4b will be out in early November. 30 minutes. That content might inform...mid-year questions from people who are in their summative year. What do I have to have? Artifacts?

Heather they also are asking now what about this with my PDP: How do I make that connection?

Barb: How can I be efficient? That's the question.

Roberta: That would be a great conversation.

Heather: There's a rumor that PDP would go away! But it's a license, has the force of law.

It's harder for the veterans. They have to relearn.

Tom: triad conversation: new teacher, principal, me. Principal: I'm concerned about the veteran teachers. People like new teachers are making them look sad...she's in month two. You can tell if BT has gone to a good pre-service program. They know about differentiation, how to use technology, how to implement.

Nicole: Idea of PI34 and using standards, evidence, is ingrained in what we do. Danielson is already being used last year. So BTs have done I with us. But those not in mentor program haven't been exposed.

Tim: even if not in good pre-service, are picking it up. You do what you have to do as a new teacher.

- October 3 Release Mentor Forum, focused on goal-setting. [Note agenda](#).
- More than 90 participants for O&C, October 7-8, 2014. Strong evals despite logistical challenges. Returning to MG for the next trainings. IPS around Mentor support.
- "What's in it for me?" Oct. 10 Principal Breakfast update. IPS. Tim update.
  - Tim: We had 18 people. No principals have done anything with their own effectiveness. It was time to sit down with colleagues, how to do together, share ideas, getting started on process together. I'm probably a month away from getting into it again for myself.
  - People contacted me afterwards, thankful. Have been asked to give part of it again.
  - Tom: this could be brought into a DC meeting as proposal—bring in district. Powerful for principals to talk about themselves, even for only 45 minutes.

### **5:40-5:45 Managing:**

*Purpose: to quickly disseminate necessary information and solicit feedback as needed..*

- Next meeting: December 9, 4-6 pm, McFarland District Office
- WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN?
  - What have you been thinking about lately in terms of leadership?

Tim: Learning communities.

Tom: We are all part of learning communities at so many different levels.

Heather: Mindfulness and focus in school. How we do our work in a mindful way. In MMSD it's been a blitz, true everywhere because of EE. How do we take care of being able to focus on things to actually get the work done.

Tim: Strategies to help us get refocused, keep it simple. Stuck on an idea. Conversation can go so many directions; how to keep collaborating and co-blabbering. ?How do you get refocused? [Rick DuFour](#).

Collaborating is really co-laboring.

Barb: Teachers are feeling stuck. Veteran teachers seem to think Marshall is the only district doing this.

Roberta: Self care a topic for 12/8? Natural tie for DCNTP: this is also disillusionment time.

### **5:45-6:00 Closing: The Courageous Follower and assessing our time together.**

*Purpose: To consider the importance of following, and to give voice to what worked, how we might be better next time, and what questions persist.*

- Video response: When have I been a courageous follower within a learning organization?
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hO8MwBZl-Vc>
- Regarding our meeting, share publically what worked, what didn't, and what questions remain for you. Consider applying the Adaptive Skills Norms and the characteristics of a learning organization to your assessment.

We will start with Courageous Follower next time.

Leaders are less important than people who follow leaders.

Have you ever been the first follower? First to join in, like when a colleague has an idea.

Nicole: Science standards example in my school. One person took on the immense challenge, others followed.

Tom: Civil war curriculum.

Courageous followers are also willing to say to people in formal and informal leadership here's what I'm hearing, here's why it's difficult.

If we talk about leaders in their absence, can breed cynicism.

Barb: I always appreciate the learning at board meetings.

Tim: The article's good timing for me. Also the norms. School dove in head first, what is this group about.

Heather; I love courageous follower. I think we have this book. This is about having agency. It isn't we're a victim of a bad leader, someone else's fault. We all have a responsibility with a leader.

Roberta: raise level of responsibility, and status. You're not JUST a follower.

Tom: underscores larger purpose of our work as DCNTP for autonomous, courageous, self-describing teachers. In some ways a mentor is a follower. You're supporting your BT to succeed.

Next time mindfulness and focus in schools. Making it understandable, manageable.

Roberta's: At my son's they start each day with meditation. Bay area.