SWAC Community of Practice

Brought to you by the SWAC Teachers of RPT 10

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SCWI Symposium - Humber College
May 10th, 2016
What is a Community of Practice?

Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.\(^1\)

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Why a Community of Practice is important to us...

“Allows teachers to discover best practices...see the way that programs are run”

“SWAC COP is important because it allows SWAC teachers to share ideas and resources. This is particularly important given how isolated we can be in our roles within our board.”

“I've found it helpful to see alternative solutions to specific SWAC issues. For example; Co-op, Marking, Course Content.”

“Gives me ideas/possibilities and helps me problem solve with people who know what I'm talking about.”

“Best practices, suggestions, ideas, support.”
What does our Community of Practice look like?

Domain:
- Shared inquiry/key issues

Community Members:
- Achieving outcomes
- Improving practice

Practice:
- Professional Learning
- Development of new resources

Continuous Improvement
- Reflection and refinement
How does our Community of Practice Run?

- Funded through our Regional Planning Team (RPT10)
- Proposed annual budget/funding request
- 1-2 meetings per semester adjacent to the RPT Meeting
- Comprised of committee members from each school board in the region with an affiliate college
- Formal Agenda/Minutes
What our Proposal Looked like

- Original Proposal
- Funding Approval
Benefits of participating in a Community of Practice

● Opportunity to interact with other teachers and administrators to share classroom experiences and problem solve
● Ability to identify and serve the needs of our unique students
● Increase in professional knowledge in a targeted area of inquiry
● Access to additional resources that extend the learning beyond each board
● Working together as a team to make changes, identify challenges and solve problems
What do our meetings look like?

- Our first agenda - [January 18, 2016 Agenda](#)
- Minutes - [January 18, 2016 - Minutes](#)
- Our second agenda - [April 13, 2016 Agenda](#)
- Minutes - [April 13, 2016 Minutes](#)
"I started to use more online components within my classroom"

"I was able to take some of the resources from one of the IDC courses presented in TVDSB to use in Fall 2016, including a useful semester planning chart."

"It was informative but I didn't act on anything."

"I am now able to teach IDC courses and I used the outlines provided at the last meeting as a template. And there has been progress with respect to information sharing electronically."

"I used some of the resources provided from the SWAC Academy class, in particular the Speak Your Truth culminating project."
What’s Next?

- Funding approved for September 2016
- Continued support in curriculum sharing practices (i.e. D2L)
- Development/sharing of new lessons, HYBRID COURSES
- Focus areas for next year: Funding. Volunteer Hours
- Present at SCWI Symposium
Our Experience setting up a Community of Practice

What do you think are the most important points to share with an audience, about our experience setting up a Community of Practice?

“The ability to meet face to face, share ideas / resources, develops better programming for our students”

“I believe the most useful points to share would be regarding the uniqueness of the SWAC program and the need for having meaningful collaboration with others who are in the same role. Learning from other boards/individuals allows us to improve our practices.”

“School boards and RPT have to be supportive, set agendas are needed to keep things productive, important to share information with school boards/RPT so progress can be made.”
Contact Information

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Practice is a shared history of learning. Practice is conversational. 'Communities of Practice' are groups of people who share a concern (domain) or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better (practice) as they interact regularly (community).

— Etienne Wenger —