
Proposed Process for School Numeracy Enhancement Initiative Site Visits

Site: TBD

Date: TBD

AHSI Leads: Tim Scheidt, AHSI Math/QR Capacity Building Lead; Nicodemus Ford, AHSI Intermediary Coach

Intermediary Representatives: TBD

AHSI Math and Quantitative Reasoning Workgroup Leaders: TBD

Host High School Leads: TBD

Rationale

Emerging from the February 2008 AHSI Math/Quantitative Reasoning mini-convening was a desired result of: Developing a culture of numeracy in our high schools (with a focus on): interdisciplinary/cross-curricular approaches, social/emotional development, and school environment. Identified strategies to be employed included: writing a concept paper to capture our collective voice, establishing a set of Guiding Principles, and the development of mixed-intermediary numeracy teams to serve as critical friends – identifying evidence of the stated guiding principles in our schools as well as providing guidance on rich numeracy opportunities that may warrant further exploration.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the School Numeracy Enhancement Initiative (SNEI) is to generate relevant information, conduct collaborative analysis of this information, and develop a strategy for improvement around enhancement of numeracy within each school. More specifically, the initiative is designed to develop and utilize Mixed-Intermediary Numeracy Teams (MINT) to conduct School Numeracy Enhancement site visits to improve numeracy in the lives of our students. By providing a personal opportunity for observation and conversations with specific focus around the numeracy guiding principles during pre-scheduled site visits, AHSI intermediary representatives will be able to serve as critical friends and provide focused and meaningful feedback to our hosts and help determine, by listening to the collective conversations, areas of support most needed in their school, while host sites will have a structured opportunity to self-assess their progress towards building a culture of numeracy. We acknowledge that this is one step in the growth process and that it will be the responsibility of the host school/organization to use the feedback provided to create and follow through on a self-improvement plan. Additional follow up support may be requested by the host school/organization and provided by this team of visitors.

As a direct outcome of this process, it is our hope that AHSI intermediary participants/leaders will be armed with the understanding and helpful tools to create numeracy team initiatives in their own schools. Conducting and evaluating the practice at one school serves as a starting point to further strengthen and reflect on numeracy team development and practice in their own learning communities.

SNEI Goals

- To provide a structured opportunity for the host school's staff to self-assess their progress towards numeracy goals
- To increase the visibility of numeracy and its various manifestations, implications, and possibilities in the classrooms and programs at the host high school – i.e. to add to a growing knowledge base, concrete ways that the more philosophical ideas in the AHSI Numeracy concept paper are being implemented on the ground
- To build a replicable, collaborative process for enhancing the quality of numeracy experiences across schools
- To publicize and honor progress made by the host school towards implementation of the numeracy principles
- To identify, gather, organize, validate, and analyze tangible evidence of the degree of implementation of numeracy principles and use this information to provide specific guidance on how to enhance the implementation of these principles
- To assess specific needs and share instructional resources and strategies enabling the host school to chart and attain specific, measurable growth in the area of numeracy
- To develop the capacity for numeracy team participants to serve as catalysts for creating plans to improve numeracy in their own communities

SNEI Process

The following tables describe the main elements of the process proposed to be used to conduct site visits. It is acknowledged that each site visit will need to be customized to best meet the needs and design of the host school.

Step 1: Pre-site visit preparation	
This step includes the activities that must occur prior to the site visit by both the visiting team and the host school to ensure a productive site visit. The heart of the pre-visit preparation is the self analysis by the host school.	
SNEI Visiting Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become thoroughly familiar with <i>Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Numeracy in Our High Schools</i>, the SNEI process, and the partially completed Data Gathering Tool.• Organize and coordinate 2-3 pre-site visit conference calls with visiting team members and host school representatives to ensure clear understanding of purposes, roles, responsibilities, and expectations prior to, during, and following the site visit.• Convene SNEI participants (maximum of 12) and host school staff for an in-person briefing the afternoon or evening prior to the actual site visit.	Host School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become thoroughly familiar with <i>Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Numeracy in Our High Schools</i>, the SNEI process, and the accompanying Data Gathering Tool.• Discuss and draft a “current status” summary addressing current practice, desired plan, challenges/obstacles, desired focus of SNEI participants’ observations and thinking, and support needed as they relate to their school numeracy goals.• Collaboratively complete the evidence section of the SNEI Data Gathering Tool – a more detailed description of the integration of the numeracy principles in the classrooms and school, and deliver it to the visiting team no later than one week prior to the site visit.

<p>Step 2: Site visit and debrief This step includes the activities that must occur during and at the close of the site visit by both the visiting team and the host school to ensure a productive site visit. The heart of the site visit is critical friends' validation and collaborative discussion.</p>	
<p>SNEI Visiting Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with host school personnel to conduct a brief discussion around the concept paper (pre-read); carefully review the SNEI Data Gathering Tool; clearly explain the group rotation process and convey desired results from the site visit; and provide a sneak peek of the process to be used for the post-visit debrief. • Rotate through 4-6 designated classrooms/school locations for approximately 30- minute observations as arranged by the host high school. • Use the discussions and observations to complete the observations sections of the SNEI Data Gathering Tool to record findings. 	<p>Host School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with visiting team to conduct a brief discussion around the concept paper (pre-read); carefully review the completed SNEI Data Gathering Tool; clearly explain the group rotation process and convey desired results from the site visit and identify specific hopes and expectations for the site visit. • Facilitate rotation of visiting team members (and if desired, host school colleagues) through classroom observations and discussions with students, teachers and administrators. • Critically participate in the debrief session responding to visiting team observations and suggestions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically participate in a debrief session consisting of small group meetings with poster-sized versions of the SNEI Data Gathering Tool for synthesizing and recording observations of evidence and opportunities of the numeracy principles. Group charts will then be posted in designated spaces around the designated pre and post-visitation meeting room. Participants and school staff will have the opportunity to review and reflect on the recorded findings from each group. Small groups will then formally present their collective findings and answer any clarifying questions asked by the other groups and/or school staff. Finally, members of the visiting team will present initial suggestions for next steps. 	

<p>Step 3: Site visit follow-up This step includes the activities that must occur following the site visit by both the visiting team and the host school to ensure effective follow-up. The heart of the site visit follow-up is the action planning and implementation in the months following the visit.</p>	
<p>SNEI Visiting Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visiting team will convey a final report to the school within two weeks of the site visit containing a completed SNEI Data Gathering Tool and proposed suggested next steps and available resources for responding to the findings discussed during the debrief. 	<p>Host School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School personnel will develop preliminary 1-month, 3-month and 6-month action plans. • School personnel will monitor the implementation of their action plan.

Additional Process Expectations

1. All information gathered from the respective groups as well as any specific action plans will be typed into a comprehensive document and made available to all participants for use within their own organizations and schools. In addition, the host high school representatives will be presented with the completed SNEI Data Gathering Tool posters and recommendations for how these can be utilized for future professional development. For example, one PD session could focus on specific evidence of one or more of the numeracy principles as identified in one classroom and involve a group brainstorm on how to replicate and extend that evidence school-wide.
2. Following the site visit, SNEI representatives and host school staff will be asked to write a 1-2 page reflection of their experiences and how they intend to use their new learning to advance the numeracy initiative in their respective schools/organizations. All reflections will be collected and collated into one comprehensive document and made available to all participants.
3. We acknowledge that responsibility for follow through and action plan implementation rests with the host school/organization and it is imperative that the SNEI is viewed as a resource for helping build capacity, not dependency. We also acknowledge, however, that scheduled follow-up and gentle reminders from the outside can serve as motivation for continued action. With this in mind, SNEI representatives will be provided the opportunity to volunteer time, services, and instructional resources to the host school.

Attachments

1. SNEI Data Gathering Tool
2. Sample site visit agenda