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Subject: September

Robyn Silbey Professional Development Raising Teacher Quality and Student Achievement in Mathematics

It's nearly October! Are you in the groove? This month, the focus is on strategies to bring the best out of every student in your class.



Shout Out!
Potomac Lighthouse
Public Charter School

In This Issue

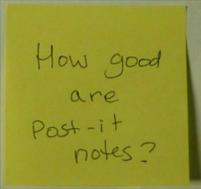
Bootlegging

Getting Smart, by Tom Vander Ark

Assessing Students Right From the Start

Bootlegging: Not Just for Moonshine

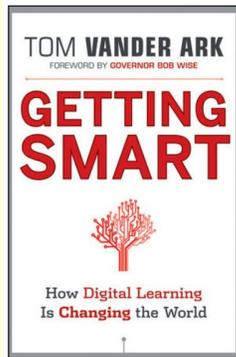
"Bootlegging" is a business practice introduced by Kenneth E. Knight in 1967 with applications in today's classrooms. It was popularized by 3M after Arthur Fry and Spencer Silver, during their bootlegging time at work, stumbled upon a product that would become post-it notes. Now embraced by companies such as Google and Apple, bootlegging involves devoting 10-20% of employees' time to working on a project of their choice.



In August, the staff at Potomac Lighthouse PCS dove into a new math curriculum. After a simulation lesson showcasing student-centered instructional delivery and alternate approaches to content, teachers dug in and planned lessons that they used during the first weeks

How might this look in the classroom? In what ways would students' imaginations motivate them to stretch their learning? Challenge your students to innovate in an untethered atmosphere and see what happens!

Getting Smart, by Tom Vander Ark



In Getting Smart, Tom Vander Ark says that the Internet makes the opportunity to learn and excel more attainable for everyone. He insists that educators need to nurture lifelong learning by guiding students to take charge of their own learning, figure out what they need to learn, and find or create a way to learn it. Schools must think of themselves as places where children will be challenged and guided in new ways to find, use, and apply information.

The Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice align with these tenets at many points: The ability to persevere when solving problems, construct viable arguments, model with mathematics, attend to precision, make use of structure, and express regularity in repeated reasoning. In what ways are you providing your students with the Practices they will need to become lifelong learners, as Vander Ark describes in his book?



Assessing Right from the Start



Assessment is a critical part of instruction. Assess your students informally in a variety of ways, using engaging activities that challenge every student in your class.

Ask students to write several equations with a target sum that you set and explain their thinking. Ten, for example, can be composed using

something as simple as a basic fact, or as complex as a multi-step problem using rational numbers. Students' choice of numbers, and the specificity and clarity of their justifications, will give you valuable information about their numerical comfort and flexibility.

of school. With prework and dedication, the Potomac Lighthouse PCS staff set themselves up for success in mathematics instruction.

Think Alouds for Coaches



In the September Coaches' Corner of Teaching Children Mathematics, Robyn describes how "Think-Alouds," so widely used in reading, can be effectively used in mathematics classrooms and in professional development.

Be sure to read Robyn's feature in the September, 2012 News & Views or email her at rsilbey@hotmail.com to obtain further details.



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Students' responses to open-ended questions like these provide critical, *individualized* data to consider while planning both the mathematics content and instructional delivery that benefits every student.

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